

# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

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## Notes of Recent Exposition.

In a previous issue we called attention in these columns to the admirable counsel given by Principal Macgregor to candidates for the ministry in his book 'For Christ and the Kingdom.' This month we cross a period of three centuries and a half to the days of Ephraim Luntshitz, to find that the problems that face the preacher and that are concerned with his preparation for the ministry were of much the same sort then as now. Luntshitz is a name that will be unfamiliar to most readers of this Journal, but, like many another unknown to posterity, he rendered conspicuous service to his own generation. He was born in Poland about the middle of the sixteenth century, he served as Chief Rabbi in Prague for fourteen years, he died in 1619, and interest in him has been revived by an elaborate essay on his sermons from the pen of Israel BETTAN which appears in volume viii.-ix. of the *Hebrew Union College Annual* (Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio).

This bulky volume, running to seven hundred and forty-six pages, is full of unusually good things, which no student of Judaism can afford to neglect. Julius Morgenstern devotes one hundred and fifty pages to the continuation of his important study of the Book of the Covenant, Meir Friedmann writes (in German) on the co-operation of women in public worship, and there is a fascinating essay by Abraham Crombach, extending over one hundred and twenty-seven pages, on 'The Psychoanalytic Study of Judaism,' on which one is tempted to

enlarge, and which may be heartily commended to those who are obsessed by the problem of the relation of sex to religion. But, however regrettably, we must, for reasons of space, confine ourselves to Luntshitz.

No one who reads BETTAN's essay can fail to be struck with the similarity of the problems that confront the modern Church and the mediæval Synagogue. The human heart has been the same in every age, and the weaknesses, the vices, the sorrows that the people bring, or do not bring, to public worship for strengthening, rebuke, or comfort, do not change with the ages. It is curious to hear Luntshitz complain that on the Sabbath and the Festivals, while the Scripture lesson is being read in the Synagogue, hosts of people are leisurely strolling through the city streets, as if they had no portion in God's law. The modern parallel is not far to seek.

And those who do come to the Synagogue, he complains, are practically destitute of the spirit of devotion. Their minds are immersed in secular interests, the meticulous observance of trifling regulations is accompanied by the grossest disregard of the fundamental practices of the religious life; envy and hate, slander and deceit, hypocrisy and avarice, vanity, lust and arrogance, prayerlessness and perjury, falsehood and frivolity—'these for ever stare us in the face.' It is a grave indictment. The result is that there is no con-

centration of the interests and powers of the worshipper on the act of devotion ; prayer ceases to have any spiritual significance, it degenerates into the vain and meaningless chirpings of the bird. While Luntshitz hurls his prophetic denunciations at such men and such moods, he makes it clear that the conduct of worship in the Synagogue is little calculated to inspire the devotional mood, the service itself being 'beset by so many disorders and distractions as to make concentrated devotion extremely difficult if at all possible.' Worship in the average Christian Church may not perhaps be beset by the same distractions, but there is here an implicit warning for those who are responsible for the conduct of Christian worship that very much is inevitably lost if a devotional temper is not encouraged by the spirit and details of the service.

Luntshitz also sorrowfully complains of the absence of interest in the Torah. 'Ours is a generation that has no real love for Torah.' Substitute Bible for Torah, and our own generation is drawn in this sentence to the life : unhappily the Bible can now with more or less truth be described as 'the book nobody knows.' And when the Torah is studied, 'hair-splitting is mistaken for brilliant scholarship.' Traditionalists would doubtless apply this description to some of the labours of the critics, and while the charge is nothing like so true as they imagine, there is just enough truth in it to serve as a reminder that the best interpreter of Scripture is he who does not forget the spirit in the letter.

Such was the situation. What manner of man must the preacher be to cope with it ? According to Luntshitz, he ought to be a highly educated man. Faith in God and spiritual insight are of course so indispensable that it ought to be possible to take them for granted in a preacher who has not mistaken his calling ; but, apart from these qualities, he ought to be able to probe the mysteries of the faith with his rational faculties, and, in addition, to be 'conversant with the physical sciences, mathematics, and astronomy.' This demand for an adequate intellectual equipment is perhaps even more in order to-day. Contemporary

systems of thought, some of which make the acceptance of religion difficult for those who have come under their influence, must be understood by the preacher and answered ; while a knowledge of the scientific outlook, and, if possible, also of one or more of the sciences, is very necessary for preachers to an age when science is profoundly influencing theological thought ; and those who pour ridicule upon the inclusion of science in a theological curriculum are doing the Church a grave disservice.

Luntshitz appears to have been a fine blend of intellectual and moral qualities. 'On the intellectual plane, we discover in him the calm, patient, erudite, and painstaking craftsman ; on the ethical plane, we encounter in him the impatient, impetuous, resolute, and unyielding moral reformer.' This is a combination rarely achieved. The ideal preacher would embody the excellences of Erasmus and Luther—the calm, exact scholarship of the one, with the fiery and soul-stirring passion of the other. Study ought not to be prejudicial to enthusiasm.

But it often is ; and Luntshitz is well acquainted with the type of scholar who cares more for linguistic minutiae than for the thought of which language is the expression. He finds it necessary to insist that the preacher or teacher who wishes to impart to his pupil a thorough knowledge of the Pentateuch must 'stress the ethical and spiritual significance of each passage read and not solely the linguistic medium.' 'To be frank,' he says, 'one is quite puzzled to know why the Pentateuch should be studied at all, if the chief objective is a knowledge of the Hebrew language.' This warning is as timely to-day as when it was written. The study of language is undoubtedly important, but chiefly as a means to an end, the end being the interpretation of literature, which is itself an interpretation of life.

What use, then, will the well-equipped preacher make of the powers he has acquired and developed during the years of preparation ? More than once Luntshitz maintains that the sole aim of all his

endeavours, whether in the written or the spoken word, had been 'to expose the godless men,' to exorcise sin and rebuke the sinner. But it is a relief to know that that was not all. The wise leader, he says, while never compromising with sin, will not forever dwell on the shortcomings of the people. He will recognize the good, as well as the evil, in men; he will welcome every opportunity to speak words of approval, to commend them for their virtues as well as to condemn them for their vices. Or, as he puts it elsewhere, his aim should be not only to declare to his people their transgressions, but to make known to them the paths of everlasting life. It is the preacher's business to proclaim not only that the wages of sin is death, but that the gift of God is eternal life—and the Christian preacher would add, 'in Jesus Christ our Lord.'

One of the most remarkable articles—perhaps the most remarkable—in *The Christian Faith To-day*, the report of the great Student Christian Movement Conference held at Edinburgh in January of this year, was that on 'Christian Community and Communism,' by Dr. Hans LILJE, General Secretary of the German Student Christian Movement. It is extraordinarily well-informed, and contains a great deal that is both novel and significant to most of us. Dr. LILJE starts with the reflection that in such a time as the present some people, who have given up hope and faith, turn to cynicism or despair, but others have lifted up their heads, waiting for some new vision of life that may come out of the chaos. To many Communism is such a light, announcing the coming of a new age.

What are the essential features of Communism? First, it is a radical change in the economic system. Russia is building up an industry of its own, using all that the West can give it. 'The machine will be our redeemer' is one of its slogans. Secondly, Communism means a new ideal of education. A new generation is being reared which rejects every remnant of bourgeois thinking. But above all Communism is a philosophy of life. It is a religion in the full sense. The mild edition of Marxism

which constitutes Western Socialism was satisfied to call religion a 'private affair.' For Communism there is no private affair. It is not satisfied with compromise. It is not satisfied with substitutes for religion. It is a definite anti-religion. It replaces one faith by another. Illustrations of this abound. In place of the 'ikon,' the image of a saint, which formerly hung on the wall of every house, there is to-day a portrait of Lenin. In place of the religious processions of the old Orthodox Church, there are to-day processions of new machines covered with flowers, and followed by enthusiastic crowds. In place of the pilgrimages of former days to the great Christian shrines, we have the hundreds of people who stand every day waiting to look at the mummified corpse of Lenin in the glass coffin at the special hall of the Red Place in Moscow.

Communism is absolutely comprehensive. It covers all life and all fundamental questions. It has created its own dogmas, and it asks from its adherents real self-surrender. It demands everything. It is this that explains the waste of life in Russia. In the minds of the Soviet leaders it is justifiable to sacrifice thousands of those who live at present in order that generations of free proletarians may live in the future. We cannot understand Communism apart from this religious enthusiasm. Take away this factor of religious faith and there will no longer be Communism. You will have moderate 'practical' socialism. Communism is a real religion claiming ultimate loyalty to its creed and morals. And it is an *Eastern* religion. Many interpretations of Communism err by trying to explain it from the Western point of view. But it is essentially an Eastern affair. It comes out of the Russian background with its paradoxes and its myth-creating atmosphere. Russia is essentially religious, and therefore the crucial fact about the relation of Christianity to Communism is that you have, not two different conceptions of economic or social life, but two religions facing one another.

And in this respect we must emphasize the definite eschatological element in Communism. The whole power of its conviction lies in its longing for a glorious future. No negative criticism of

bourgeois society, no hatred of the past, no discussion of Marxist theories could have the effect that this eschatological expectation has. And it is not a *longing* for a great future only. It is the certainty of it. At a great congress of the new faith some years ago Bucharin spoke of its progress in passionate terms. ‘We can say (he cried) with full conviction, “we are now unvanquishable.” We know that we will win the power in the entire world. We have nothing to lose but our chains.’ And amid tumultuous applause the great assembly rose and sang :

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation !

Arise, ye wretched of the earth !

For Justice thunders condemnation—

A better World’s in birth !

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Dr. LILJE goes on to deal with a vital point—the communist criticism of Christianity. This criticism stresses one point especially—the disastrous coalition between official Christianity and a special type of bourgeois tradition. The youthful idealist is impatient with a type of Christian thinking that leaves the whole question of reconstructing society untouched. The danger from which Christianity has not always escaped is that it stands for the existing order, showing no understanding of the radicalism with which a new order of society is confronted. One of the evil traditions of much Christianity is the falsification which has made Christian faith a mere example of the average bourgeois philosophy of life. It has become moulded into something very different from what it originally meant ; a happy and satisfied social order has been reflected in the good-tempered, unexcited, and unexciting ideas of average Christianity, which had lost most of its enthusiasm and fervour and had become quite uninteresting. In this respect Communism has an important task to fulfil. It is a God-given punishment to a lame and degenerate Christianity. Either Christianity must understand the full extent to which the present crisis has come, or there will be no hope for it.

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This leads to the last point : What is the Christian response to the challenge of Communism ? The answer is very simple, but at the same time very

serious too. Christianity must first of all realize that this is one of the most serious crises in which it has ever been. A new creative religion has risen which is challenging the total life and thought of present-day Christianity. Communism cannot be opposed by ideas, but only by religious reality. Can Christianity claim to be a religion in the most vital and real sense of the word ? The answer to that question is to be found in these three assertions. First, Christianity must get away from the bourgeois falsification of its message. The criticism of Communism in this respect is utterly right, and cannot be met without a real conversion of Christianity. We need nothing more than a fundamental re-thinking of the Christian message. The world will be changed only by men with deep conviction. The great task which Communism has to perform in the history of the Church is to bring back Christianity to its original message. And it is teaching us what we ought never to have forgotten, that real faith is asking for everything in the life of man.

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Secondly, there is no real religion without a clear eschatological element. It is completely hopeless to think that the high expectations of the coming of a class-less society could be met by a Christianity which dares not believe in the eschatological element of its own creed. Both things are true in Christianity : that the Kingdom of God shall come on earth, that there will be all the gifts of God in Jesus Christ in this world, and, on the other hand, that the disciple of Jesus Christ always is waiting for the coming of his Master. Only a this-worldly Christianity could forget the genuine power of the eschatological expectation of the Early Church.

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And finally—and perhaps most important of all practically—the relative truth of Communism is its longing for real community. This is the point at which its criticism is most bitterly right. But Christianity possesses the truth, if it will put it into effect. Christianity alone will be able to find a solution of the serious conflict between the individual and society. The Communist has fought the idea of God, and has lost the image of man. He has fought bourgeois individualism by subjecting the individual to society. The Christian community

alone gives its true place to personality. It is in God and in our fellow-men that personality reaches its full stature. And the challenge of Communism comes in the end to this: Are there men and women, filled with fervent conviction and burning faith, who are fully prepared not to live their lives by themselves and for themselves, but to surrender them to the Lord, to whom all our lives belong?

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In the Additional Notes to the *Commentary on Acts* recently edited by Dr. Kirsopp LAKE and Dr. Henry J. CADBURY there is an interesting discussion by the latter of the reference in Acts to gestures involving the use of dust, or of garments, or both. The interpretation of these gestures remains without settled solution, and the line of solution here suggested is certainly worthy of notice.

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In Ac 13<sup>51</sup> it is recorded that Paul and Barnabas on leaving Antioch of Pisidia shook off the dust of their feet. Rabbinic commentators on the New Testament regard the gesture as indicating that the city thus rejected is treated as the heathen, the dust from whose lands brings defilement. Yet the New Testament passages suggest that the act was not so much one of self-purification as one of warning to those left behind.

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In Ac 14<sup>14</sup> it is recorded that Paul and Barnabas, hearing the natives of Lystra call them gods, rent their garments asunder. Here, even more certainly than in the previous passage, Rabbinic testimony seems to afford the explanation. The rending of garments is the prescribed reaction against blasphemy (cf. Mk 14<sup>63</sup>, Mt 26<sup>65</sup>), though even in Jewish literature it is by no means limited to cases of blasphemy. And it would seem that protestation, rather than horror of blasphemy, was the meaning of the Apostles' gesture at Lystra.

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In Ac 16<sup>22</sup> it is recorded that the *strategi* at Philippi, tearing off 'their' clothes, bid Paul and Silas to be scourged with rods. But whose clothes? If those of Paul and Silas, then the matter is not a

gesture at all. But it is not impossible that the passage really means the clothes of the *strategi* themselves. Having heard the charge they express their horror and officious zeal by the violent tearing off of their own garments.

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In Ac 18<sup>6</sup> it is recorded that Paul shook out his garments against the Corinthian Jews, who were blaspheming. Possibly he shakes his clothes because he has already deposited his sandals according to custom at the synagogue door. The meaning of the gesture is conveyed in the words that follow, in which Paul is represented as saying, 'Your blood be on your own head.' More plainly than the shaking off of dust the shaking out of garments means 'washing one's hands'—to use another figure—of other men's guilt.

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In Ac 22<sup>22f.</sup> it is recorded that the hostile Jews of Jerusalem in their rage against Paul used both the gesture of casting their garments and that of throwing dust into the air. It may be that they were stripping themselves for action and throwing the dust with murderous intent, but the signs may not have been gestures of actual attack. Perhaps the object was to avert from themselves the curse that is likely to fall on the blasphemous (cf. Job 2<sup>12</sup>).

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Thus practically all the gestures in Acts could come under the same heading, avoidance and depreciation of blasphemy. 'Whether it be the shaking of dust from the feet at Antioch, the rending of garments at Lystra or Philippi, the shaking of garments at Corinth, or here the gestures with both dust and garments, it is the old prophylactic of magic against blasphemy that is always involved. The Jews count it blasphemy for Paul to claim a Divine mission to the Gentiles, Paul counts it blasphemy for the Jews to reject the message, the Gentile praetors or *strategi* at Philippi count Paul's un-Roman teaching blasphemy, and of course Paul and Barnabas shudder with horror at being worshipped at Lystra as gods.'

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'But it must be admitted that if such an apotropaic purpose is the origin of the gestures, neither the author nor the readers of Acts were probably

aware of it, certainly not in the instance at hand. For the proper gesture for sorrow, and probably for blasphemy, was to rub dust, earth, or ashes on the head.'

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Biblical students have long been engaged in analysing the doctrines and characters of the Bible. In particular New Testament students have dissected the mind of the Apostle Paul to find the Rabbinic, the Hellenistic, and the other elements that moulded it. It has occurred to Mr. Vergilius Ferm to analyse the analysts, at least so far as these are American. The result is : *Contemporary American Theology*, i. (Round Table Press, New York ; \$3.00). Twelve American theologians were asked to trace the influences which have entered into their thinking, the influences including circumstances, experiences, situations, temperamental sympathies and prejudices, personalities, events and books.

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The 'Americans' include Dr. E. F. SCOTT, who confesses that 'there is much in the American way of thinking which I have never been able to assimilate or even to understand'; and one of the 'theologians' is Professor E. S. BRIGHTMAN, of Boston University, who tells us that 'to be regarded as a theologian . . . arouses my sinful, Adamic nature to no slight extent.' This Pilgrim's Progress of America's theologians can hardly be called a reassuring volume. The editor remarks : 'The multitudinous cross-currents in the contemporary stream, many of which are either referred to or directly presented in this book, put before the uninitiated what must seem a confusing spectacle indeed.' Apparently we are to infer that there is somewhere a circle of initiates on whom it will not make this impression. We gather that the roads to the Celestial City are many and winding. We can only hope that ultimately some of them will reach the goal.

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Frankly, theologians are most convincing when they speak *ex cathedra* and do not tell us too much of the processes by which they reached the position they happen to occupy at the moment of writing their latest book ; and especially when several of

them do not do this in one volume. A number of the writers were born into conservative homes. Professor BRIGHTMAN, for example, tells us that his father was 'conservative, yet cheerful and affectionate.' Light is shed on this quaint remark by the story told by Whittier to Professor J. W. Buckingham, of Charles Kingsley's remark to him that 'having been brought up under the dismal shadow of Calvinism, when he finally learned that God is at least as good as the average Church member the relief was unspeakable.'

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Professor MACHEN tells us that he is still a 'believer in the truth of the Bible,' whatever that may mean ; and speaks of the 'mighty attack upon the truth of our religion,' by the higher critics. But most of the writers now occupy far different positions. Some of them, on the big questions of God and the world, have changed their minds several times. Professor Shirley J. CASE somewhat jauntily tells us that he cannot promise to dole out 'truth' once for all delivered to the saints. Jesus spoke of a life founded on a rock. The uninitiated would like at least to feel some confidence that there is truth somewhere to be found. But, when asked what the Christian of to-day should believe, the only reply Professor CASE can make is : 'What he thinks he ought to believe in the light of his own experience and knowledge.'

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If Professor CASE stresses the influence of environment in the making of an ever-growing Christianity, to Professor Albert C. KNUDSON 'the cult of the contemporaneous, as it has been called, seems . . . of all our modern fads the shallowest.' Theology has not yet altogether discarded the New Testament. In the wistful, reverent, and characteristic words with which he closes his spiritual autobiography, Professor E. F. SCOTT reveals that he is conservative enough to believe that in the New Testament there is a word of God for our age. Its message to the first century does not exhaust its meaning. 'I seek for the further truth which would still prove itself, if only we could find it, to be the power of God and the wisdom of God. Now and then I seem to catch a glimpse of it but it keeps eluding me, and I know that I shall never apprehend

it except in fragments. Yet the confidence that it is there affords me motive and guidance in all my work on the New Testament.'

One of the chief impressions left on one's mind is that there is more to be said for the American Fundamentalist than one had supposed. Some of the theologians are conscious of owing something to their parents ; at least one confesses he owes much to his wife ; sometimes an unusual experience such as a serious illness is recognized as having played a part. Professor Douglas Clyde MACINTOSH finds the most fundamentally determinative event in his Christian life in what he is not afraid to describe as a conversion experience in his fourteenth year. But, speaking generally, the formative factors to which most weight is given are books and teachers. The fact that their influence is sometimes repellent rather than attractive reminds us that the mind is not a rudderless ship at the mercy of every wind that blows.

On the whole subject of the making of a theologian the wisest word has been spoken by Dr. E. F. SCOTT. He cannot tell how he himself has developed ;

still less can he tell how any one else has developed. Whatever may be the truth about the theologian, Dr. SCOTT suspects that, so far as scholarship is concerned, much of the sorting out of 'influences' is delusion. One does not require to be a Barthian to believe that the Bible and the Divine Spirit have something to say to a theologian. Possibly most of the writers felt themselves precluded by the terms of their reference from discussing this aspect of their subject.

Fortunately Professor Rufus M. JONES felt no such constraint, and the result is a paper of very great interest on 'Why I enroll with the Mystics.' Rejecting the historical emphasis on mysticism as negation, mental blank, the dark night, he is a mystic of an affirmative type that claims positive fellowship with God. He cares nothing about arguments to prove the reality of God ; for he has passed through an experience like that of the lame man in the third chapter of Acts, and is as certain that his new freedom from anxiety and fear, his new vitality, came from God as that the visible comforts and care that surrounded him were the work of human love.

## Readers of the Ancient Church.

### IV.

#### The Third Century and its Greatest Christian : Origen.

BY PROFESSOR W. EMERY BARNES, D.D., CAMBRIDGE.

THE end of the second and the first years of the third century of our era saw a remarkable expansion of Christianity. Two writers who wrote in the first quarter of the third dwell with special emphasis on this expansion. In the East, Clement of Alexandria writes : 'The word of our teacher did not remain in Judæa only, as philosophy remained in Greece (*ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι*), but was poured out over the whole world (*ἐχύθη δὲ ἀνὰ πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην*), persuading whole households both of Greeks and of barbarians and converting not a few even of the philosophers' (*Strom. vi. xviii. 167*). In the West,

the eager Tertullian of Carthage writes : 'We are of yesterday, and now we have filled both the world and all your haunts' (*vestra omnia : Apol. cap. 37*). Later, in the middle of the century, the African Cyprian declares : 'The devil sees the idols abandoned and his shrines and temples deserted because there are too many believers' (*De Unit. 3*).

If these statements are rhetorically exaggerated, yet there is much fact behind them. Harnack does indeed call attention to the importance of a passage of Origen (*c. Celsum*, viii. 69), in which the Christians are contrasted *ὡς νῦν πάντα διάγοι* ("as at present

quite a few') with the population of the whole Empire. But other passages attest the fact that Origen is fully aware of the great progress made by Christianity; in particular he speaks of the spread of the religion among people of good position and matrons (Harnack, *Die Mission*, ii. 549). Christ was gaining learned men like Clement and Origen to be His 'ambassadors.'

The political history of the Empire in the third century suggests that the Christians had grown greatly in numbers and influence. Christianity could not now be ignored; Christians were either persecuted or favoured by the attentions of the Imperial House.

The period was marked by instability in the government. After the vigorous reign of Septimius Severus (died Feb. 211) rival emperors succeeded one another in rapid succession, and the attitude of the central government to the Christians underwent rapid changes. Septimius forbade conversion to Christianity (A.D. 202), and Maximin (235-238) gave orders that the 'rulers' (*τῶν ἀρχόντας*) of the churches should be slain (*ἀναιρεῖσθαι*; Eusebius, *H.E.* vi. 28). On the other hand, Severus Alexander (A.D. 222-235) was respectful to the new faith, and had statues of Christ and of Abraham in his private chapel. Philip the Arabian (A.D. 244-249) was friendly, while his successor Decius (249-251) was responsible for a general and vigorous persecution.

It was an age of interest in religion, an interest which manifested itself in strange forms. There was actually a Syrian Emperor, El Gabal (Helio-gabalus), who is described as a monster of vice and luxurious living, yet he carried out a definite religious policy. His syncretic religion combined the worship of the Syrian Baal and the Carthaginian Ashtoreth with the old Roman worship. The world was looking for new gods and for a religion which had more life in it than the old Roman ceremonies. At Alexandria the Catechetical School was founded and manned by Christian scholars for the purpose of answering the questions of heathen inquirers.

During this period Christian thought was actively engaged on the subject of the Trinity and the Person of Christ. The challenge was given, 'If you confess Jesus as Divine, do you not acknowledge two gods?' Beryllus, Bishop of Bostra in Arabia, being determined at all costs to maintain Monotheism, taught a form of the doctrine of *monarchia*, i.e. that Christ had no personal existence before the Incarnation, and that the person incarnate was really the Father. So Beryllus claimed that he

and those who agreed with him alone could hold that there was one *ἀρχὴ* only, one 'beginning' or 'source' of all things. The doctrine of three Persons and one God was not yet formulated, but Origen succeeded in persuading Beryllus to give up the views which had caused much dissension in the Church.

The middle of the third century was marked by two calamities, a great pestilence, and the defeat and death of a Roman Emperor. Decius (251) fell in battle with the Goths, and the persecution which he started was stayed even before his death. But the plague at Rome and Alexandria was a more terrible infliction, redeemed, however, by the courageous behaviour of the Christians in the latter city. They visited and nursed the sick, and buried the dead. One of the noblest pages of Christian history is found in the letter of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, describing the ministrations of his people to the plague-stricken in his city (Eusebius, *H.E.* vii. 22). Christian charity, as manifested in care for the sick and poor and in love of the brotherhood (in spite of some sharp controversies), was well maintained in the third century.

On the subject of Christian stedfastness under persecution, Harnack calls attention to a remark of Origen (c. *Celsum*, III. viii.) to the effect that there were only a few martyrs: 'Few and very easy to count are the men who in the course of time have died for the Christian religion, since God would not have the whole nation of them slain' (*ὅλιγοι κατὰ καιρὸν καὶ σφοδρά εὐαρίθμητοι . . . τεθνήκασι . . .*). But stedfastness was shown in bearing other sufferings, sufferings which were comparable with death itself. Christians were tortured, were maimed, were banished, were 'sent to the mines,' but they did not 'accept deliverance' by denial of Christ. A multitude of such 'confessors' living on with broken health or broken bodies must be added to Origen's comparatively 'few' who laid down their lives as 'martyrs.'

In two points Christian morality stood in sharp contrast with the morality of the heathen, namely, in the attitude towards women and towards slaves. Women became saints and heroes under the gospel: slaves knelt with their masters at one Table before the Heavenly Master of both. Christian life as a whole kept on a noble level of moderation, without yielding to the attraction of a self-centred asceticism. 'It leaned,' writes Professor Gwatkin, 'more to Puritan fear of sin, refusing rather certain pleasures as dangerous than pleasure generally as mere temptation. Indeed, the picture drawn in Clement's

*Pædagogus* is in this respect very like the best English life among serious men of all parties in the seventeenth century. And this is a much truer view of Christ's teaching than the gloomy pietism of Tertullian, which counts it almost discreditable for a Christian to die otherwise than as a martyr' (*Early Church History*, i. 241).

Perhaps the noblest Christian of the third century was another Alexandrian, Origen, who became confessor, doctor, and ascetic, and was worthy to be called saint.

In his eighteenth year Origen (Origenes), the son of Leonides, was already a Christian philosopher and a teacher of Gentile inquirers. He had also shown his Christian mettle. When his father was arrested during the persecution of A.D. 202-203, Origen was eager to stand by him and to make the same confession. But his mother, Eusebius tells us, compelled him to remain at home by hiding 'all his clothes' (*τὴν πάσαν ἐσθῆτα*, *H.E.* vi. ii. 5). Leonides was martyred, the fear of persecution remained, and no qualified Christian ventured to take the vacant headship of the Catechetical School of Alexandria. The head had recently been no less a man than Clement of Alexandria. And now, writes Eusebius (*H.E.* vi. iii. 1), certain Gentiles approached Origen with the request that he would fill the gap (*προσέσων αὐτῷ τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν ἔθνων ἀκουστόμενος τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ*). He accepted the post of danger and of usefulness, and was soon after confirmed in it by Demetrius, the Bishop of Alexandria. It was indeed the post of danger, for though Origen himself was mercifully protected, some of his pupils were martyred. Among these was a woman named Heraïs, who 'while still under instruction received the baptism which is by fire' (*Ἐπὶ κατηχουμένῃ τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ διὰ πυρὸς λαβούσα τὸν βίον ἐξελήνθεν*, *H.E.* vi. iv. 3).

Origen's activity was not confined to Alexandria; his merits became widely known, and calls for help came from cities round the Eastern Mediterranean. Unfortunately this fame abroad led to trouble for him at home. While staying at Cæsarea in Palestine he was officially requested to speak (*διαλέγεσθαι*) and to interpret the Divine Scriptures in the public services of the Church (*ἐπὶ τὸν κονοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας*). But his action, which was approved at Cæsarea, was condemned at Alexandria, and Demetrius recalled Origen to his own city. The Bishop's objection was apparently that a layman preaching when bishops were present (*παρόντων ἐπισκόπων λαϊκοῖς διηλεῖν*) was an unheard-of thing (*H.E.* vi. xix. 17). A second visit to Cæsarea became the cause of Origen's final separation from his

work at Alexandria. The Palestinian Bishops ordained Origen a presbyter (without first obtaining the sanction of the Bishop of Alexandria, it is said). This act made a final breach between the scholar and the Bishop, and Origen abandoned Alexandria to settle in Cæsarea of Palestine.

Here, apparently, he executed his great Biblical work, the *Hexapla*. It was a gigantic task, for it contained all the canonical books of the Old Testament. In six columns he exhibited side by side in succession (1) the Hebrew text, (2) the same repeated in Greek letters, (3) the literal rendering into Greek of Aquila, (4) the elegant rendering of Symmachus, (5) the LXX with supplements from the later translators, where it was defective, and with the obelos against words not found in the Hebrew, and last of all (6) the edition of Theodotion. So the Christian scholar with the *Hexapla*, or even the fifth column of the *Hexapla*, before him could continue the discussion with his Jewish opponent, who was accustomed to appeal from the LXX to the 'Hebrew Verity.' Origen had himself learnt Hebrew.

Perhaps it was the presence of a large community of Jews in Alexandria that gave Origen his deep interest in the Old Testament. For its literal meaning he cared little, but he accepted heartily the maxim, *In veteri testamento Nova latet*. In Gn 26<sup>18ff.</sup> it is recorded that Isaac reopened the wells which Abraham's servants had dug and the Philistines had stopped with earth, and, further, that when Isaac dug fresh wells the Philistines contended with him over them. Origen gives a spiritual interpretation to this narrative. 'Our Isaac' who re-opened the old wells and dug new ones is our Lord Jesus Christ. The servants of His Father, who dug the old wells, are Moses, David, and the Prophets, who wrote the books of the Old Testament. But the Philistines who fill these wells with earth are those men who put an earthly and carnal meaning upon the Law and the Prophets, and shut up the spiritual and mystical meaning, in order that neither they themselves nor others may drink of the living water. The servants of 'our Isaac' are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John . . . Peter . . . and the Apostle Paul, who all dig the wells of the New Testament. . . . 'Let us become like that scribe of the gospel of whom our Lord said that he brings forth out of his treasury things new and old.' Thus does Origen exhort us (*Hom. in Gen.* xiii. 2).

This great textual critic accepted his own counsel, and became one of the greatest interpreters among the Fathers of both Testaments. His exegetical

work is now known to us mainly through fragments, considerable indeed, but still only fragments. Fortunately important passages on St. Matthew and on St. John are still preserved in the original Greek. But it is, perhaps, chiefly as a Christian philosopher that Origen is remembered. He shows himself as such, not only in his formal work, the *de Principiis*, περὶ ἀρχῶν, 'On first principles,' but also in his commentaries on Scripture.

The *de Principiis* was written when Origen was in the full course of his work at Alexandria. He was probably 'not much more than thirty years old and still a layman' at the time, but a comparison with his other works shows that he did not at a later time materially alter the views of the *de Principiis*. In judging the work we must remember that Origen was 'the theologian of an age of transition' (Westcott). His language has not the theological precision of later times, and so it came to pass later that theologians in controversy claimed the authority of Origen for opposing views. Thus, while some described Origen as the fountain-head of Arianism, his orthodoxy was defended by no less a champion than Athanasius.

Controversy has raged specially over the teachings contained in the *de Principiis*. It is unfortunate that we do not possess this work as Origen wrote it. But of the original Greek only fragments remain. We have mainly to depend on the translation executed by Rufinus, who makes no claim to accuracy in the modern sense. Rufinus 'mended' passages in the *de Principiis*, which seemed to be heretical, with the help of parallel passages in other writings of Origen. He makes, however, a claim to 'faithfulness': *Nihil tamen nostrum diximus, sed licet in aliis locis dicta, sua tamen sibi reddidimus.*

With caution, therefore, we proceed to use the *de Principiis*, ed. Rufinus. There Origen starts with the authority of the utterances of our Lord, not only those spoken when He was in the flesh, but also those spoken long before in the Old Testament: *prius namque Christus dei verbum in Moyse atque in prophetis erat.* He proceeds to give an outline of Christian doctrine on the usual lines of a *regula fidei*, but when he begins to speak of the Holy Spirit, we see that the clearness of definition of the later creeds was not for him. 'Next,' so he says, 'it has been delivered to us that the Holy Spirit is joined to the Father and the Son, in glory and worship. It is not now clearly seen whether He is born or unborn, or whether He also is to be held to be Son of God, but of these things inquiry is to be made of Holy Scripture, according to our powers, and diligent search is to be made.' Earlier

in the same confession Origen's doctrine of the God-head bears the marks of conflict with Gnosticism: 'One God who created and ordered all things . . . the God of all just men . . . of Moses and the prophets . . . a God just and good . . . the God of the Apostles and of the Old and New Testaments.' Here lies a rejection of Marcion's division of Deity into the 'just' God of the Old Testament and the 'good' God of the New.

As to Creation, Origen held views of his own. The word used for the foundation of the world (*καταβολή*)<sup>1</sup> suggests that this world was 'cast down' from some loftier state. It points to a fall in another order. But 'in the beginning' when God created those things which He willed to create, i.e. rational creatures, nothing moved Him to create except Himself, i.e. His own goodness. But since the creatures were rational they were endowed with the power of Free Will. Finite creatures once made either advanced in spiritual growth through imitation of God, or else fell away through neglect of Him (*per neglegentiam*), *de Princ.* II. ix. 6. 'Evil, it follows, is negative' (Westcott). God made matter also which might serve as a fitting expression of the character of rational creatures and become a medium under many conditions for their training.

Man, Origen teaches, is made for the spiritual and cannot find rest elsewhere. He combats earnestly the views of those who, adhering to the literal sense of Scripture, drew earthly pictures of the joys of a future heaven. He writes (*de Princ.* II. xi. 2): 'Certain men, therefore, renouncing the use of their intelligence and following the mere letter of the Law, suppose that the promises of future bliss will be realized in bodily indulgence, and so they desire to have such bodies after the resurrection as have not lost the capacity for eating and drinking (and so on). And they imagine for themselves an earthly Jerusalem to be rebuilt with precious stones for its foundations and jasper for its walls.'<sup>2</sup>

Origen, on the other hand, realized keenly the action of spiritual forces in our present life. Men have guardian angels, and angels are present in the assemblies of Christians to help their devotions. So he writes (*contra Celsum*, viii. 64) that 'when men choose and prefer, as they pray, the more excellent gifts, then ten thousand holy powers pray with them, though unsummoned.' Departed saints sympathize with the men who still struggle on earth with a sympathy larger than that of those that are clogged by the conditions of mortality.

<sup>1</sup> Mt 25<sup>34</sup>, al.

<sup>2</sup> I have abbreviated this passage.

On this matter Origen appeals to 2 Mac 15<sup>12-16</sup>, where Maccabæus dreams that the godly high priest Onias and the prophet Jeremiah are interceding for Israel, and that Jeremiah delivers to him a golden sword wherewith to smite the enemy and oppressor.

From Christian philosopher to Defender of the Faith the transition is natural. Origen was one of those who 'face the spectres of the mind and lay them.' His work in answer to the philosopher Celsus is certainly one of the noblest 'Apologies' for Christianity. Celsus was able, no doubt, to criticise Origen's use of the Old Testament on many points with success, but in general grasp of moral and religious problems he remains inferior to the Christian Apologist. This statement is well illustrated by the passage (*contra Celsum*, vi. 78) quoted in Dr. Hort's *Antenicene Fathers*, p. 132 ff. Celsus had scoffed at the lateness in time of the Incarnation and its limitation to an obscure corner of the world, 'a scoff in form, but covering a serious question.' The scoff must be given here, if only to show that Christianity defeated the ridicule of the ancient learned world—no slight achievement. 'If,' so Celsus wrote, 'God, like Zeus in the comedy, wished on awakening out of His long sleep to rescue the race of men, why ever did He send this "spirit" (*πνεῦμα*), as ye call him, into a lonely corner (*μιάν γωνίαν*) of the world, when it was necessary rather to breathe a similar inspiration into many bodies and to send them forth throughout the whole world? The comic poet did at least make Zeus send Hermes to the Athenians and the Lacedæmonians, but do you not think that you have excelled the poet in the comic part in imagining the Son of God being sent to the Jews?'

Gravely does Origen make his answer: 'Observe here Celsus' want of reverence when he, forgetting his philosophy (*ἀφιλοσόφῳς*), compares our God, the Creator of the Universe, with the god in his comedy who on awaking despatches Hermes. We have said above that when God sent Jesus to the human race, it was not as though He were at length awake from a long sleep, but Jesus, though He has for worthy reasons only as it were now been assigned the work that belongs to Incarnation, yet He has ever been the Benefactor of the human race. For no one of the good deeds wrought among men has ever happened apart from the visitation of the Divine Word, which visits the souls of those who are able (perchance only for a brief period) to receive such effective promptings to good. Nay, even the appearance of Jesus in a lonely corner of the world (as it seems) happened for a worthy

reason, since it was surely necessary that He of whom the Prophets spoke should appear among those who have learnt that there is One God only, who read His prophets, and learn therefrom that He whose coming is predicted is indeed the Christ who is preached and that He came at a time when the Word (*ὁ λόγος*) was about to be poured forth from one lonely corner over the whole earth.

'Wherefore also there was no need that many bodies should be made everywhere, and many spirits like unto Jesus, in order that the whole world of men might be illumined by the Word of God. For it sufficed that the one Word rising like the Sun of Righteousness from Judea should send forth rays that pierce into the soul of them that are willing to receive them. And if any one desire to see bodies filled with a Divine Spirit like to that One Christ ministering everywhere to the salvation of men, let him consider those who in every place do wholesomely and with an upright life teach the word of Jesus, who themselves also are called *Christs* by the Divine Scriptures in the words, *Touch not my Anointed Ones* (*τῶν χριστῶν μον*) and *do no harm to my prophets*.'<sup>1</sup>

In reading Origen we are constantly made aware of the fact that he knew persecution at first hand. In his boyhood his father had been a martyr (c. 202, 203), in his young manhood his class had contained half a dozen members who gave their lives 'for the testimony of Jesus.' It is not surprising, then, that Origen should write a work concerning persecution; nor perhaps that it has the daring title, '*Ὀριγένους εἰς μαρτύριον προτρηπτικός*', 'Origen's Persuasive to submit to Martyrdom.' It is a living book addressed to two Christians, Ambrosius and Protocletus, a presbyter of Cæsarea, who were in prison during the persecution of Maximinus (235-237). Their sufferings, Origen assures them, are a proof of their maturity: he begins with an appropriate quotation from Is 28<sup>9f</sup>, according to the text of the LXX: 'Ye that are weaned from milk, ye that are withdrawn from the breast, receive affliction upon affliction, receive hope upon hope.' Their endurance, Origen says, will be repaid with unspeakable joys. He refers to the words in which St. Paul relates his own experiences, 'We were made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men' (1 Co 4<sup>9</sup>). Origen takes up the saying with exaltation for the men of his own generation: 'So the whole world (*κόσμος*) and all the angels on the right and on the left and all men, both those who are on the part of God and those who are of the rest, shall hear of us as we fight the

<sup>1</sup> Ps 105<sup>15</sup>.

fight for the name of *Christian* (*περὶ χριστιανισμοῦ*).’ And, finally, Origen comes near to saying that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church: *τάχα τῷ τιμώ αἴματι τῶν μαρτύρων ἀγορασθήσονται τινὲς*.<sup>1</sup> ‘Perhaps by the precious blood of the martyrs some shall be bought’ (i.e. redeemed).<sup>2</sup>

I have left to the last the consideration of one of the shorter works of Origen, which is nevertheless second to none in spiritual value. The scholar and the able controversialist in Origen did not extinguish in him the saint, as his treatise *περὶ εὐχῆς* abundantly shows. Unless he had lived for many years in close communion with God, he could not have so written *On Prayer*. It is a living book written to meet the objections of men who maintained that there is no room for prayer in the general scheme of things. ‘What need is there,’ some asked, ‘to offer prayer to Him who even before we pray, understands what things we have need of?’ Others, again, asserted, ‘If sinners were estranged from their birth (Ps 58<sup>3</sup>), and the righteous man is set apart even from the womb of his mother, in vain do we ask for forgiveness of sins, or for strength to receive the spirit.’

Origen in his study of prayer starts, as usual with him, with fundamentals. There are two points, he says, to consider: *first*, What to pray for; *secondly*, How to pray for it. He answers the question, *What may we pray for?* in words that have been attributed to our Lord Himself, *ἀτέρε τὰ μεγάλα, καὶ τὰ μικρὰ ὑμῖν προστεθήσεται—ατέρε τὰ ἐπονάνια καὶ τὰ ἐπίγεια ὑμῖν προστεθήσεται*, ‘Ask for the great things, and the small shall be added to you—ask for the heavenly things, and the earthly shall be added to you.’ To this general direction Origen immediately adds special injunctions straight from the Gospels: ‘Pray for them that despitefully use you’—‘Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he send forth labourers into his harvest’—‘Pray that ye enter not into temptation’—‘Pray that your flight be not in the winter.’ Three of these enjoin petitions of a purely spiritual nature: ‘Pray for enemies: Pray that spiritual

workers may be raised up: Pray to be saved from temptation.’ The one petition of a temporal nature which Origen allows here implies a deep resignation to the Divine Will: ‘Pray that your flight be not in the winter.’ The flight itself is to be accepted, but the fugitive is permitted to pray that the sufferings of the flight be not intensified.

A prayer to the mind of Origen is an act of submission and communion. It is not open to the objection urged against it as an attempt to change the Will of God. Prayer is, in fact, co-extensive with the higher life. The life of the saint is said by Origen to be ‘one great continuous prayer’ (*μίαν συναπτομένην μεγάλην εὐχήν*).<sup>3</sup>

The death of Origen was a martyrdom except in name. He was imprisoned, threatened, and tortured during the persecution of Decius (A.D. 249–251). He came out of prison after the death of the Emperor, but apparently only to die in 253. He was buried at Tyre.

After his death his orthodoxy was impugned on many counts, and the controversy between the assailants and defenders became very bitter. He was denounced as the fountain-head of Arianism, because he taught the subordination of the Son to the Father. On the other hand, he certainly maintained that the Son was co-eternal with the Father. The Father is always Father, He did not beget the Son by a finished act, but He is continually begetting him (ἀλλ' ἀεὶ γεννᾷ αὐτὸν, *Hom. in Hieremiam*, ix. 4). Men’s minds were moving towards Nicene orthodoxy, but the hour for it had not yet struck. On this whole matter it is well to allow the historian Socrates to speak the last word. Socrates, after quoting Athanasius as saying, ‘The admirable Origen beareth witness to our opinion in declaring that the Son is co-eternal (*συναετόν*) with the Father,’ adds, ‘Those who revile Origen are unaware that they speak evil of Athanasius who praised him’ (*H.E. vi. 13*).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W. Emery Barnes, *Early Christians at Prayer*, 136–139.

<sup>2</sup> *Autorities.* The works of Origen as far as published in the Berlin Corpus; B. F. Westcott, ‘Origen’ in W. Smith’s *D.C.B.*; *Religious Thought in the West*; H. M. Gwatkin, *Church History*, II. xx.

<sup>3</sup> L; cf. ‘Semen est sanguis Christianorum,’ Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, I.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 1 Co 6<sup>20</sup>.

## Literature.

### THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

We welcome the appearance of *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I. *The Acts of the Apostles*—vol. iv. ‘English Translation and Commentary,’ vol. v. ‘Additional Notes to the Commentary’ (Macmillan; 25s. net each volume), by Professors Kirsopp Lake, D.D., D.Litt., and Henry J. Cadbury, Ph.D. With these two volumes the first part of a notable project has been completed. What precisely the remaining part or parts are to be we do not know. But this first part was conceived more than twenty years ago by Dr. Foakes Jackson and Dr. Kirsopp Lake. They had reached the conclusion that an exhaustive study of the Acts of the Apostles was still necessary, despite the labours of many generations of scholars, in order to prepare for a right understanding of the history of the Christian Church. The first and second volumes, which are introductory to the study of Acts, appeared respectively in 1920 and 1922. They dealt with the Jewish, Gentile, and Christian backgrounds of Acts and with its composition and authorship respectively. They contained essays of varied interest and varying importance by many scholars, and the first volume in particular aroused a good deal of controversy and criticism. The third volume, on the Text of Acts, appeared in 1926 and was the work of one man, Professor J. H. Ropes, whose labours met with wide-spread admiration and approval. It is matter of satisfaction that only two hands have been required in the production of the translation, commentary, and most of the notes contained in these concluding volumes of the first instalment of what appears to be a truly great project. But perhaps the joint-editors have abandoned their original scheme, which seems to have included a survey of the life and influence of Jesus on a similarly grand scale.

Dr. Foakes Jackson affirms that judged solely by the extent of the Commentary, and the variety of information contained therein, no book of the Bible has been subjected to so exhaustive a treatment in a single work; and we can certainly join with him in hailing these two volumes by Dr. Lake and Dr. Cadbury as a splendid achievement.

The English Translation is what it professes to be, at once literal and idiomatic, and it appears to be successful in its aim (Ac 24<sup>18</sup> and 26<sup>28</sup> furnish instances) of making ambiguous or ungrammatical in English a sentence which is so in Greek. On one word only of the translation we remark. In

Ac 17<sup>18</sup> *spermologos* is rendered ‘cock-sparrow.’ But the translators do not appear to be at all satisfied with the rendering. ‘Seed-picker’ (the literal meaning) would have done almost as well. But terms of abuse very promptly forget their origin, and Goodspeed’s ‘rag-picker’ brings out better the idea of intellectual scavenging; and, after all, the E.V. ‘babbler’ is not so very far out.

As for the Commentary, it is fresh and attractive as well as marvellously learned; and the Supplementary Notes of the fifth volume yield further fruits of the learning and scholarship of the editors and their collaborators. We can but name some of the subjects treated: the Hellenists, the Conversion of Paul, the Unknown God, Roman Law and the Trial of Paul, the Titles of Jesus in Acts, the Chronology of Acts, the Policy of the early Roman Emperors towards Judaism.

### SAMARITAN ESCHATOLOGY.

If any one can speak with authority on the Samaritans, it is Dr. Moses Gaster. He has been in contact with them for over thirty-five years, and he owns the largest private collection of Samaritan MSS in the world. It is therefore with peculiar interest that we turn to his *Samaritan Eschatology* (Search Publishing Co.; 12s. 6d. net), and assuredly we are not disappointed; for he revolutionizes traditional conceptions of that people, and he does so on the basis of Samaritan documents themselves, which he quotes very extensively in a most readable translation, tracing their doctrines—especially of immortality and reward and punishment—from their first beginnings, through the Hilluk, the Yom-al-Din, etc., right down to the Malif, or catechism, which is taught to Samaritan children to-day.

Dr. Gaster’s contention is that the Torah was in possession of both the Jews and the Samaritans long before the Exile, and that there was a genuine parallelism in their respective developments of the Oral Law, evidenced, among other things, by the close similarity between the relevant Samaritan literature and the Palestinian Targum; there is in both the same emphasis, resting on a fanciful exegesis of Pentateuchal passages, on the world to come. Certainly no one who reads Dr. Gaster’s extensive translations and comments can remain under the delusion that the Samaritans had no eschatology. Its principal source is the Song of

Moses in Dt 32, and especially v.<sup>35</sup>, which in the Samaritan Version reads, 'On the day of recompence and reward,' and is referred to the world to come. Exegesis and argument of this and other passages may be to us hopelessly unconvincing, but they are solid testimony to the beliefs that were cherished.

There is an interesting chapter on Purification, Death, and Burial, and in the important concluding discussion of the Taheb, Dr. Gaster makes it clear that he is not a Saviour, nor a Messiah in the current meaning of the word, but, though a mortal man, a Restorer, a prophet who will bring to the world the message of the Divine truth enshrined in the Law. In this erudite volume Dr. Gaster has broken new ground, he has rescued from obscurity much that is not only valuable but illuminating; and we look forward with interest to the subsequent volume in which he will deal with all the Samaritan laws and religious practices.

#### *MORAL MAN AND IMMORAL SOCIETY.*

The main thesis of *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, by Professor Reinhold Niebuhr (Scribners ; ros. 6d. net), is suggested by its title. Professor Niebuhr, who is an editor of 'The World Tomorrow,' and a member of the staff of Union Theological Seminary, holds that collective morality is far inferior to individual morality, and that there is little hope of improving the former except by some kind of coercion. The important thing is to find out what kind of coercion is least incompatible with the rational and moral resources of mankind, since these latter, of themselves, are quite insufficient for the abolition of injustice. As to three-fourths of its contents the book presents us with an acute and relentless analysis of the ills of present-day society and their immediate historical antecedents, and nothing could be more attractive than the vigour and clearness of the style in which this portion is written. The last few chapters of the book are less satisfactory; the author seems to lose his firm grasp of the subject and to be content with rather inchoate conclusions. His analysis of the actual is much more convincing than his vision of the possible.

The book is confessedly written 'from the perspective of a disillusioned generation,' and its tone is on the whole pessimistic. The author is the sworn foe of sentimentality and over-emphasis upon our rational and moral resources. But in his ruthless exposure of the hypocrisies of purely nationalistic politicians and the concealments with

which economically powerful classes seek to rationalize or cover over their injustice towards other nations and classes, he is rather apt to overlook tendencies favourable to progress. In his contempt also for artificial educational methods, based on the idea that by means of such education the general conservative attitude of any given society may be improved, he rather loses sight of the fact that there would be no desire even for education of this specialized kind if it did not, to some extent, represent public opinion.

Not only are actual rational and moral resources insufficient, but, according to Professor Niebuhr, there is no possibility of increasing them to such an extent as to bring about an improvement of society. Religious resources also, though real for the individual, are meagre and limited in their social application. The religious sublimation of the will-to-live is apt to add to the selfishness of a powerful group. The emphasis in deep religious experience upon an overwhelming sense of sin plunges all human activity into a darkness which blurs outlines, and prevents that 'nicely calculated less and more' on which social morality is grounded. The love-universalism which Christianity inculcates, depends too much on personal contacts, and cannot easily be applied to the complex problems of social groups. A great gulf is fixed between the individual and society, unbridgeable in our author's mind even by the consideration that if individuals are good, the society which they compose cannot be wholly bad. According to him we dare not shut our eyes to the fact that nations and economic groups, privileged and proletarian alike, have been, are, and will be incurably selfish. 'Every effort to transfer a pure morality of disinterestedness to group relations has ended in failure.'

The remedy for injustice is to be found only in coercion, which is of two kinds, violent and non-violent. Professor Niebuhr discusses the possibility of advance by revolution, and the probability within the next few decades of Marxian catastrophic change. He decides—and he gives the impression that he does so almost reluctantly—against this probability for the reason that the partially disinherited workers are not likely to make common cause with the wholly disinherited. Further, even though we are not called upon to make any absolute distinction morally between violent and non-violent coercion, violence is to be deprecated because it always involves further violence. Fanaticism is an inevitable accompaniment of revolutions, and 'fanaticism, when expressed in political policy, shuts the gates of mercy on man-

kind.' But, on the other hand, little reliance can be placed on quiet parliamentary procedure. Socialism can never win sufficient parliamentary power, because the skilled workers will always place national before class loyalty, and in their peaceful negotiations with the privileged classes, socialism will always be betrayed by its own leaders. 'There is only one step,' the author says cynically, 'from a rationally moderated idealism to opportunism, and only another step from opportunism to dishonest capitulation to the *status quo*.'

What, then, would Professor Niebuhr have as a remedy? It is not clear. Our highest ideals should be retained, indeed, but as a luxury and not as a necessity of life. If we really wish the removal of injustice we must pin our faith to some kind of passive resistance or civil disobedience, not shutting our eyes to the fact that coercion does not become any less physical because it is negative, and not falling into the confusion, which our author attributes to Mr. Gandhi, between non-resistance and non-violent resistance, but calmly accepting the latter as the method which the 'disinherited' will most probably adopt, and which will be discovered to be the type of coercion most compatible with the moral and rational factors in human society.

#### INTERNATIONALISM.

This careful and well-informed discussion of *The Religious Foundations of Internationalism*, by Professor Norman Bentwich (Allen & Unwin; 10s. 6d. net), will give support and clarity to many widely diffused thoughts at the present time. Professor Bentwich, who is Professor of the International Law of Peace at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, regards his University as occupying a symbolic position. The universities of the world should, he holds, be federated, and the head should be one which will occupy itself with matters that are of concern to all sections of mankind. By tradition and opportunity Jerusalem is indicated as the most suitable location for this federal headship. Judaism, at once national and international, first conceived of this national vocation of all her people towards spreading the conception of universal moral law. It transformed religion, which was at first the motive power in the formation of States and the ally of conquest, into a binding power. But for centuries religion had to yield to the imperialistic idea of Rome, and accept the doctrine of a forced peace through the dominance of a single ruler, rather than of a real peace which

allows of diversity and is based on the principle of justice. In Christianity also a religion of humanity was tied to the logic of Greece and the law of Rome, and, when it became imperialistic, a pacifist religion changed into a militant one. The age of the Reformation saw the revolt against centralized authority and the idea of the dominance of one universal creed, but the freedom of the individual and of minorities was at that crisis gained at the cost of the deification of nationalism and the fairly general subordination of the Church to the State. Now in our own day has come the opportunity of connecting political practice once more with religion and humanity, through the development of the fundamental universalistic principle of Judaism in alliance with a revived Christianity and the spiritual forces that may be discovered in other religions. The Great War showed at once the zenith of nationalism and the need of getting beyond it. The aim should be, not unity in the sense of uniformity, but rather co-operation with a full recognition of diversity. The Church has failed in the past to put an end to war. As has been cynically remarked, 'The Church has always been opposed to past and future wars, but not to present wars.' She must now repudiate her compromises of the last fifteen hundred years. The need is urgent, for human mastery over the forces of Nature makes internecine extermination not impossible. The time also is ripe. 'Science has made the world one neighbourhood. Religion should make it one brotherhood.' Divisive nationalism has been the residuary legatee of religious differences, and conversely the co-operation of religions should mean the fraternity of the nations, and the infusion of spiritual power into the organization of the League of Nations, which will no longer be describable even by the critics as a 'body without a soul.'

#### IMMORTALITY.

There are many books written on immortality for the man in the street, who will not think, and many also for the philosopher or the scientist, who thinks too much, or, at least, too abstractedly. Mr. Don P. Halsey, in his clear and pleasantly written but rather diffuse book on *The Evidence for Immortality* (Macmillan; 10s. net), appeals by preference to men of the type of the judge on the bench or the jury in the jury-box. He hopes that his arguments will convince those who are in the habit of dealing, not with demonstrative, but with presumptive and circumstantial evidence. He

desires in discussing the topic of immortality, to follow Lord Mansfield's dictum that 'opinion should be regulated by the superior number of probabilities on the one side or the other,' and by this method he himself reaches a conclusion favourable to the belief in immortality. He passes in rapid review the discussions of ancient and modern philosophy and indicates the most recent tendencies of science, and he finds that the general direction is towards a spiritual view of reality. Indeed, in establishing this conclusion he rather loses sight of his main topic, and has ever and again to pull himself up with a jerk, and apply his generalities to the particular subject of immortality, to which of course they will be found to be, on consideration, entirely relevant. He holds that science and philosophy while they cannot demonstrate the immortality of man, are equally unable to demonstrate the contrary. The day of materialism is over ; science is ceasing to be dogmatic, and her specialists are recognizing that they are at liberty to consider only the kind of evidence that belongs to their own particular sphere of investigation. The greatest scientists have been, and are, aware of the infinite and eternal, and dependent on the promise of the mystery that is beyond our knowledge. It is not the pygmies of our race to whom we owe our belief in immortality, and there are no rational considerations which prevent us from assigning importance also to the wide-spread character of the belief. We may find further support for this belief in a deduction from the general consideration of the justice of God, in the confidence that He who cared for the beginning of our lives will also concern Himself with their mortal ending. After all, faith is not to be ruled out in our conclusions on this subject, for it 'is not the enemy of reason, but, on the contrary, its torch.' If, finally, we are of non-speculative temperament, we are permitted to fall back on the old argument that it is more prudent to believe in immortality than to disbelieve in it, for the reason that, if the belief is erroneous, we shall not be in existence to be ashamed of our credulity ; while, if it is true, it will support us in the crossing of the dark river, and encourage us to prepare for the life beyond. Mr. Halsey, however, goes far beyond this dilemma of calculation, and will help many of his readers to follow on to fuller faith.

#### THE FAITHS OF MANKIND.

A welcome addition to the products of the Student Christian Movement Press has appeared under the

above title from the pen of Mr. William Paton, M.A. (2s. 6d. net). As Secretary of the International Missionary Council and Editor of the 'International Review of Missions,' and as one who has personal experience of the East, Mr. Paton has unique opportunities of knowing not merely the historic faiths of mankind, but also the contemporary currents of religious thought in the different parts of the world.

His method is to take, one by one, the subjects with which religion deals : Man and his World ; God ; Sin, Suffering, and Salvation ; the Good Life, and the World to Come ; and to ask in each case what Muhammadanism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and the Chinese religions have to say about it. As the author acknowledges, on this method no religion except Christianity is exhibited as an organic whole ; but the book is really about Christianity, and the plan has decided advantages.

Mr. Paton concentrates on the essentials ; he is always delightfully lucid, even when dealing with themes that do not readily lend themselves to lucidity ; he never gives the impression of trying to score a point ; and his criticisms are so just that we believe the more intelligent followers of the religions discussed would acknowledge their truth. The comparative study of Muhammad, Buddha, and Christ is typical of the newer and more comprehending Christian outlook on other religions.

A closing chapter deals with the case for the Christian World Mission. One of the chief difficulties of mission work to-day is the belief, fostered by Mr. Gandhi among others, that the East has nothing to learn from Christianity. Mr. Paton is always judicial, but never impartial in the sense of regarding the forward march of Christianity as a matter of indifference. This book may be heartily commended to all who wish to have an understanding interest in the work of the Church in other lands. Yet Mr. Paton's plea for missions is not that the world needs God, but that God needs the world. 'The Christian faith is faith in a living God, and the ultimate ground of the missionary passion lies not in our sense of the need of man, but in our knowledge of the loving purpose of God.'

#### SERMON VOLUMES.

We have to draw attention to four volumes of sermons—two are published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton ; one comes from the S.P.C.K., and one from the house of Harpers.

Dr. Ebenezer Macmillan of the University of Pretoria tells us in his preface that it was through the witness of the Oxford Group that the awakening

came to him: 'I shall never cease to give God thanks for a Fellowship that refused to take me for granted, and gave me the challenge I needed and really wanted. It was the challenge of the Absolute. I took it without knowing what would be demanded of me.' His sermons are 'Oxford Group Sermons' in the sense that the message came to him during the early morning Quiet Time, observed as a result of Group influence, and so have a 'giveness.' The title of the volume is *Seeking and Finding* (5s. net).

The late Rev. Arthur Hird was head of the Theological Department of Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton for a number of years, and he was known in many of the Free Churches of England as an arresting preacher. 'It is fitting that one who sponsored so many books and helped so many authors should have a little book of his own, however imperfect, to enshrine a lovely memory,' writes Sir Percy Hodder-Williams. The difficulty in making the collection of sermons has been that Mr. Hird has left us no full sermon MSS—he never confined himself to his MS. But though the addresses are short, they are in no sense notes (*The Test of Discipleship*; 5s. net).

Professor H. Maurice Relton's volume forms one of 'The Scholar in the Pulpit' Series published by the S.P.C.K. (3s. 6d.). Its title, *Messages from a Troubled Church to a World in Trouble*, shows that these scholarly utterances are narrowed in scope by the purpose of the author. This is noticeably so in the sermons dealing with the relation between Church and State. But some have a wider significance, as will be seen from the one which we have given—in abbreviated form—in 'The Christian Year' this month.

Professor Lynn Harold Hough, in *The University of Experience* (Harper; \$1.00), deals with pressing questions in a scholarly way. Reinhold Niebuhr in his introduction says that Dr. Hough, like Dean Inge, has been particularly 'anxious to join the light which shines from Athens and the Light which came from Judea.'

The best way to choose is to sample for oneself, and these sermon volumes may be sampled in the pages of 'The Christian Year'—this month's in the case of three of the volumes, and last month's for Mr. Hird's sermon.

#### THE TALMUD.

What exactly is the Talmud? Does it represent the Rabbinic Judaism of the New Testament—roughly, of the period from 4 B.C. to A.D. 70?

What was the attitude of our Lord and of St. Paul to Rabbinic Judaism, and how is it to be accounted for? These questions are dealt with by Canon A. Lukyn Williams, D.D., in a vivid and convincing way in his small but valuable book, *Talmudic Judaism and Christianity* (S.P.C.K.; 2s. net). He explains clearly the nature of the Talmud, and he maintains that it does afford trustworthy evidence as to the general character of the Rabbinic Judaism of the first century. His contention that this Judaism was as bright and happy a religion as the world has ever seen raises a curious problem with regard to the criticism of it and its representatives by Jesus and Paul; but in a singularly interesting discussion he argues that the term *προκρίται* applied by Jesus to the scribes and Pharisees does not convey the idea of religious pretence, but rather of superficialism in religion, and it was this, too, that Paul had in mind in the passages in which he seems to condemn the Law. New Testament students will find this a most suggestive little book.

But to get some real idea of the contents of the Talmud we must turn to *Everyman's Talmud*, by the Rev. Dr. A. Cohen, M.A. (Dent; 7s. 6d. net), which is described with complete truth on the jacket notice as 'The first comprehensive summary, for the English reader, of the teaching of the Talmud and the Rabbis on Ethics, Religion, Folk-lore, and Jurisprudence.' Indeed, this description errs on the side of modesty, as is shown by the titles of the successive chapters, which are these—The Doctrine of God, God and the Universe, The Doctrine of Man, Revelation, Domestic Life, Social Life, The Moral Life, The Physical Life, Folk-lore, Jurisprudence, and The Hereafter. The book is a veritable mine of information, not only on points of general interest, such as the Talmudic views of marriage and divorce, education, master and man, the care of the body, the resurrection of the dead, superstitions, the significance of dreams, the Sabbath, the modes of carrying out the death penalty, etc., but also on points of peculiar importance for the understanding of the Jewish mind, such as the Bath Kol, Metatron, the good and evil impulses, repentance, atonement, etc.

Throughout the book, with only the necessary connecting comments, the Talmud itself is allowed to speak with its multitude of voices on its multitude of themes. It covers, indeed, the whole of life, and its wisdom is brightened by scores of delightful stories: *haggada* and *halaka* both get justice here. It must have been a tremendous labour of love to organize such a mass of disparate material and to present it under the appropriate rubrics. When one

considers the immense range and variety of interest represented by these four hundred and twenty pages, the care with which the material has been selected, and the skill with which it has been systematized, the low price of the book can only be regarded as astonishing. Christians, who in ignorance often speak foolishly of the Talmud, will have occasion to revise their opinions after reading this book. We wish for it a wide success.

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We had occasion recently to deprecate the publication of a mischievous book on the League of Nations. We have all the greater pleasure in welcoming and commending a thoroughly good book on the League from the same publishing house. It is entitled *The League of Nations in Theory and Practice*, by Mr. C. K. Webster, M.A., Litt.D., with some chapters on international co-operation by Mr. Sydney Herbert, M.A. (Allen & Unwin; 10s. net). The book presents in very readable form an admirable survey of the whole wide range of the activities of the League, the International Labour Office, and the Permanent Court.

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A book of immense practical value to students is *The Poor Student and the University*, a Report on the Scholarship System, with particular reference to awards made by local Education Authorities and to assistance offered to the intending teacher, compiled by Miss L. Doreen Whiteley, B.A., F.L.A., with an introduction by Mr. Percy Alden, M.A. (Allen & Unwin; 6s. net). The fullest information is given as to help which may be obtained from all sorts of sources to enable the poor student to study at a university, and there is one chapter specially for the 'intending teacher.' The book is more useful to English students than to Scottish, but there is a great deal of information helpful to both. And, incidentally, there is a good deal in it that is interesting to the general reader. It is to be hoped that it may be widely advertised, and that libraries especially may purchase copies liberally. Not many 'poor students' can afford 6s. to consult a book like this. But for many of them the information given here is vital.

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Two years ago we reviewed, appreciatively, 'Outlines of Teaching Sermons for a Year.' This is followed now by *Outlines of Teaching Sermons for a Second Year*, edited by the Rev. C. E. Hudson (Allen & Unwin; 2s. net), and it is even better than

the first volume. The idea is to supply to the clergy guidance on big topics, on literature, on ways of handling the subjects, which will enable the pulpit to fulfil its teaching function. If this is to be done rightly, it must not be mental dope, and it must be systematic. There must be a real scheme which will teach something, not haphazard but coherent. These conditions are admirably fulfilled here. No clergyman can use this matter as it is presented in these notes. The outlines need independent thought and study. But sufficient help is given for this by lists of books and by definite explanations. We may add the titles of the sections: 'God and Man,' 'Prophetic Religion,' 'Between the Testaments,' 'The Making of the New Testament,' 'The Person of Christ,' 'The Holy Spirit,' 'The Christian Life in the World.'

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*A Philosophy of Religion* (Allenson; 5s. net), by Dr. Ambrosius Czakó, is described by Principal Micklem of Mansfield College, who writes the Preface, as 'one of the few philosophies of Christianity since the Middle Ages.' It is too flattering a description of a book so limited in design and scope as this is, but it is certainly a philosophy of Christianity rather than a philosophy of religion, which it professes to be. It is true that in its earlier pages it adventures, and adventures bravely, upon the effort to establish a theistic view of the universe, but the main body of the book is occupied with an interesting and incisive comparison between Catholicism and Protestantism—with what Dr. Czakó calls 'a Comparative Study of Denominations.' He speaks from an inside knowledge of both Catholicism and Protestantism, yet with a certain detachment from both, as indeed befits the philosopher of religion. His descriptions of Catholicism and Protestantism are, no doubt, true to type, for he is a capable observer and wields an experienced pen, but one feels that they must be truer to Continental Christianity than to the Catholicism and the Protestantism with which we are familiar in Britain. But we commend this essay very cordially, not only as at once readable and provocative, but as marked by ability, spirituality, and a refreshing downrightness.

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The Rev. Dr. Buchanan Blake has added to his many services as an interpreter of the Bible by the publication of *A New Guide for Bible Readers* (Allenson; 2s. 6d. net). He deals with the Old Testament by describing briefly the spirit of its principal books, and by commenting on such incidents as serve to indicate the progressive purpose that

runs through it. In the New Testament the treatment of the gospel material is, on the whole, topical ; the leading incidents in the Book of Acts are well brought out, while a brief sketch of the Epistles is followed by statements on 'The Full and Final Faith of the Church,' 'The Claim of Christianity to be the Final Religion,' and 'A Suggested Course of Study.'

Dr. Blake has his eye throughout upon the things that matter. Recognizing that credal forms of truth have often led to unhappy divisions, he urges that the duty of the Church is to proclaim the way lived and taught by Christ. 'It might have been better for the world,' he says elsewhere, 'if there had been more religion and less theology.' Teachers will be quick to see and to seize the value of suggestive sentences such as this, 'The three denials (of Peter) were blotted out by three protestations of devotion' (Jn 21<sup>15-19</sup>). The book, which is furnished with useful tables of dates covering both Testaments, is written primarily for teachers in the day school or the Sunday school, but it could be used with equal advantage by ordinary readers. The maximum of benefit will be derived from it by those who use it as an accompaniment to the 'School Bible,' published by Nelson, and the low price brings it within the reach of all.

That notable annual biographical dictionary, *Who's Who* (Black; 6os. net), has now become a bulky volume of over three thousand six hundred pages of double columns, containing about forty thousand biographies of men and women of more or less distinction. It contains photo-portraits of the King and Queen, the Prince of Wales, the Duke and Duchess of York, the Princess Royal, Princess Elizabeth, and the Duke of Gloucester. There are records that occupy only a few lines and there are a few that occupy more than a column. Of the latter, one of the most outstanding is that of Dr. Rendel Harris, so long one of the most distinguished contributors to THE EXPOSITORY TIMES. Of the former is that of Mr. Stanley Baldwin, M.P., Lord President of the Council, and the holder of hon. degrees from the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, St. Andrews, Birmingham, and Durham. His son, Mr. Oliver Baldwin, writes under the heading of education that he learnt football at Eton ; in other things he is beginning to learn. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald states that he was educated at a Board school. He might have added, 'and at the library of the Guildhall, London.' By far the most numerous clan in the volume are the Smiths. The bearers of this name occupy forty-

eight columns. The most distinguished in this remarkable list is the Very Rev. Sir George Adam Smith, Principal of Aberdeen University since 1909. Mr. George Bernard Shaw fills three-quarters of a column with the titles of his articles and plays. One reads the list with surprise at the number that are already among literary lumber. Sir James Matthew Barrie, O.M., compresses the titles of his essays and plays into a modest space. Another member of the Order of Merit, the late Mr. John Galsworthy, has a larger number of plays on his list than is generally believed. It is impossible to peruse the columns of *Who's Who* without feeling that those on the list of the Order of Merit are small in number compared with those who have made good the title to be there.

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Dr. H. G. Enelow continues and concludes his monumental work on Al-Nakawa's *Menorat Ha-Maoz* by publishing its last nine chapters (9-20; Bloch Publishing Co., New York). These deal with the social aspect of ethical obligation, and thus carry on the great tradition established by the Old Testament, and continued in the Talmud. Al-Nakawa's aim was to offer the classic precepts and pleas taught by Jewish masters 'in methodical form, with proper regard to the needs of his contemporaries.' He preserves much that is valuable in older sources, and Dr. Enelow learnedly discusses his debt to them, and the relation of the Menorah to the Midrash Ha-Gadol. To the twelve chapters are appended three supplements, the last chiefly concerned with that love of Peace, which has always been so dear to the Jewish heart. The finely printed Hebrew text covers no less than six hundred and twenty-eight pages, and Dr. Enelow's concise account of their contents is itself a veritable 'Lamp of Illumination' in miniature. The successive chapters deal with the honour due to parents, marriage, education, the honourable conduct of business, justice (its officers and administration), contentment, the control of anger, flattery and scoffing, friendship and love, evil talk, keeping another's secret, and the rules of good behaviour. The indexes alone run to forty-five pages. These elaborate discussions, alive with human interest, blend the shrewdness of the Book of the Proverbs with something of the analytic genius of the Ethics of Aristotle.

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Professor Edgar J. Goodspeed, the translator of the American version of the New Testament, who is distinguished on both sides of the Atlantic for his Greek scholarship, has given delightful proof of

his versatility in a series of short papers published under the title of *Buying Happiness* (Cambridge University Press; 12s. net). Dealing with such themes as The Age of Salesmanship, Foreign Lecturers, The Art of Being Outshone, these essays contain a criticism of contemporary American and British life written with fine humour and kindly satire. For a time of depression like the present they are a rare tonic, pouring as they do a stream of gentle raillery upon our fear of my Lady Poverty, and bidding us look with courage upon the face of adversity. 'To the anxious citizen who asks, "Is this revolt?" we answer, "No, Sire! It is Evolution." We will come out of it economically altered, perhaps reduced; but with some new power, some unsuspected capacity, some sounder character developed. This is the way the race has come, and this is the way it must go.'

The Rev. W. Perry, D.D., Dean of Edinburgh, has written a most interesting and informing book on *The Oxford Movement in Scotland* (Cambridge University Press; 3s. 6d. net). The historical part is attractive, and there is a good account of the influence exerted by the Movement on ceremonial, on architecture, on piety, on theology, and on the conception of the Church. Incidentally, Dr. Perry deals with a good many points of importance in a glancing fashion. He thinks the prospect of union between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism must be sought along the lines of comprehension, not compromise. This is wise, and is more and more coming to be the general opinion. Presbyterians will probably be surprised to hear that in regard to 'Apostolic Succession' they are at one with Episcopalians. 'They both believe in Apostolic Succession, the one through presbyters, the other through bishops.' Adherents of both Churches will find much in this book to admire, and not a little to enlighten and edify.

*The Church of Scotland Year Book, 1933*, has become a volume of more than four hundred pages (Church of Scotland Committee on Publications; 2s. 6d. net). The present Moderator, the Right Rev. Professor H. R. Mackintosh, writes of it, that 'seldom can a more precise or attractive compendium of information about its own affairs have been made available for any Church. And that the volume should cost no more than half-a-crown is an added marvel.' By Royal Warrant the Royal High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland takes rank next to the Sovereign and before the members of the Royal

Family, and the Moderator of the General Assembly takes rank next to the Lord Chancellor and before the Dukes. Beginning with an excellent summary of the proceedings of last year's General Assembly, at a crowded forenoon meeting of which the Archbishop of Canterbury, himself a Scotsman, appeared in person to give an invitation to the Lambeth Conference for unrestricted conference on Christian unity, which was accepted after full debate, there is nothing of moment in the work of the Church of Scotland—congregational, statistical, financial, personal, administrative, academic—that will not be readily found here. The editor, the Rev. L. C. Phillips, Buckie, and his assistant, the Rev. Dr. Caldwell, have deserved the Moderator's whole-hearted commendation.

How vain to paint the lily, and how futile to embroider the gospel story! *Kingdoms of the Carpenter*, by Miss Muriel Clark (Constable; 2s. 6d. net), contains four short chapters, 'Youth,' 'Love,' 'Hate,' 'Sorrow,' in which are depicted imaginary incidents and conversations in the life of Jesus. The design is doubtless good, and the workmanship has its merits, but the task is beyond the writer's powers, and it may be gravely doubted whether it should ever have been attempted. As the early apocryphal Gospels ran riot in the realm of the miraculous, so the modern tendency is to stress the sentimental and the sexual. In sane Christian judgment it must ever be accounted a daring thing to put words into the lips of Him who spake as never man spake, and to conceive scenes by way of addenda to the gospel story.

We welcomed with high expectation another book by the Rev. A. B. Scott, D.D., of Kildonan, on the subject which he has made peculiarly his own, the Ninianic Church. The new book is *The Rise and Relations of the Church of Scotland: Early Brittonic Period and S. Ninian's Period* (Andrew Elliot, Edinburgh; 10s. 6d. net). So far we found what we expected, a volume packed with the results of a competent scholar's investigations in a difficult field accessible to few. Yet we confess to some disappointment. There seems to be lack of balance between the 'rise' and the 'relations.' It takes Dr. Scott too long really to get going with Scotland at all. All the matter is intrinsically valuable, but we doubt if it be all equally relevant. Again, Dr. Scott reiterates the points which he urged in former works—(1) that Ninian's Mission extended and endured to a much greater extent than the traditional view allowed; (2) that this,

the earliest, Church in Scotland was entirely independent of Rome. On both points since Dr. Scott first wrote decided views have been expressed on the other side by writers who should not be simply ignored. We are surprised that, so far as we see, Dr. Scott takes so little notice of such criticism. Again, we do wish that Dr. Scott had not introduced Pelagius to whitewash and idealize him. We admit that Nestorius was little of a Nestorian; we are not prepared to accept that Pelagius was no Pelagian, or that his views were as harmless as Dr. Scott seems to think. And why is Pelagius here at all? We are certain that few will be ready to claim—not to say acclaim—him as even a distant ‘relation’ of the Church of Scotland.

The Rev. Edgar W. Thompson, M.A., has written an admirable book, *The Word of the Cross to Hindus* (Epworth Press; 7s. 6d. net). It is much to be hoped that the particular audience to which it is addressed will study it with care. For twenty-five years in India, and fourteen years as Missionary Secretary, when combined, as in this case, with a wise and tolerant mind that deals frankly with the real problems, and a marked gift of writing, make Mr. Thompson an ideal advocate of Christianity. Nothing could be more winsome than the letter to an Indian friend, so sympathetic and understanding, yet so very sure that Jesus Christ has that to give which is not to be found elsewhere.

But the title may have one unfortunate effect—that of giving the impression that the book is meant only for a specialized audience. That is far from being the case. It should be read widely at home.

It falls into two sections, both excellent. The first is a masterly and detailed examination of the reasons for Christ’s unpopularity with the religious leaders of His day—under the headings of The Offence—of the Novelty; of His Teaching; of His Personal Claims; and of the Revolution He made certain. The first of these is especially well done. And then follows an examination of the Offence of Christ for Modern India; Indian Incarnations and that of Jesus Crucified; Karma and the Cross; Sacrifice, Jewish, Indian, and Christ’s; and Self-Denial or Self-Annihilation. These are great moulds. And into them the author has run much impressive and right helpful thinking, born out of wide knowledge of books, Eastern and Western, of man’s heart, and above all of Jesus Christ. This is a work to be highly and urgently commended, a satisfying study in a field in which there is much vague and ignorant talk.

Dr. Mingana has speedily followed up his fine edition of Theodore of Mopsuestia’s Commentary on the Nicene Creed by an edition, equally fine, of his *Commentary on the Lord’s Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist*, which constitutes the sixth volume of the ‘Woodbrooke Studies’ (Heffer; 21s. net). It has all the characteristics and all the merits of its predecessor. The Syriac text, whose typography is of singular beauty and clearness, is accompanied by an English translation which is not only readable but attractive and idiomatic, and both are preceded by a sketch which emphasizes the chief points in the six homilies, and discusses the points of resemblance between the ceremonies and prayers described by Theodore and those found in the Apostolic Constitutions. Dr. Mingana rightly maintains that the importance of this Commentary can hardly be overestimated for a right understanding of the historical and theological background of the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist. This very competent volume will be welcomed alike by students of Semitic languages, Church history, theological thought, and liturgical usage.

A very charming, and at the same time instructive, book on the relations of different churches in ancient and modern days has been written by the Rev. E. H. Dunkley, M.A., *The Church of England and Catholicism* (Hunter & Longhurst; 2s. net). The chapters of the book have been gathered together from various quarters—‘The Spectator,’ ‘Theology,’ ‘The Guardian,’ and other journals. The little book abounds in clever generalizations, which will be questioned by many readers. Here is one: The Eastern Church is based on History, the Roman on Experience, the Anglican on Reason, and the Protestant on the Bible. Another is that the Catholic stresses the action of God in religion, the Protestant the action of man! But this provocative liveliness is one of the charms of the book. Another is its fine spirit. There is a great deal of informative history in it, and a broad spirit of really catholic charity which is very attractive.

*The Infinity of God* (Longmans; 7s. 6d. net), by Canon Bertrand R. Brasnett, M.A., B.D., Principal of the Theological College of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, is a thoughtful and independent study in the Christian doctrine of God by one who is convinced that the Christian theist needs the concept of infinity for an accurate understanding of the Divine nature and being. The treatment is logical, lucid, and progressive. The author prefaces his

discussion with a study of Christ as the Perfect Man and the Incarnate. He then argues for an infinite God, laying stress upon the consideration that the religious consciousness remains unsatisfied unless the God it worships is acknowledged to be infinite. The Infinity of God is then examined in relation to the Divine attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, and love, the boundaries of orthodox Christian theism being nowhere transgressed. The discussion concludes with a further reference to the Incarnation as the check and safeguard of any theory of the nature of God which purports to be within the limits of the Christian theistic tradition. The Christian doctrine of God must be squared with that of the Incarnation if the structure of Christian theology is to be properly completed. It is the author's contention that the thought of infinite love as regulative of the life of Deity harmonizes with the life of Deity as incarnate.

We meet in church for Christian worship as moderns and as Christians. That simple fact raises important problems in connexion with the use of the Psalms, for no inconsiderable part of the Psalter is archaic and sub-Christian; there are psalms like 83 and 87 rich in geographical names, psalms like 105, 106, 135 minutely reminiscent of Hebrew history, and other psalms, like the imprecatory, marked by a vindictiveness which ill consorts with the Christian temper. What are we to do with the Psalter in view of these facts? This is the question discussed by Professor Earle Bennett Cross, Ph.D., in *Modern Worship and the Psalter* (Macmillan; 10s. net). He believes that about a third of the Psalter could be used without any material change, and the psalms he discusses he presents in a translation which reproduces the original rhythm. As he has congregational worship in view, he suggests certain hymns whose successive verses may be sung at various points in the course of the recitation of the psalms; we do not, however, think Henley's 'Invictus' a very pertinent accompaniment to Ps 130. As the citizen of a democracy, Dr. Cross does not regard psalms like 2, 72, 84, with their allusions to a king, as appropriate for worship in the United States. To make Ps 148<sup>14c</sup> 'more specifically pertinent,' he suggests for *Israel* in the phrase 'Israel, his intimate folk,' might be substituted *these United States*. This would indeed be very pertinent—some would even venture to say impertinent.

The Teaching of the Buddha was gathered in the Pali Canon in various ways. In the *Anguttara-*

*Nikāya*, for example, it is arranged according to numbers, much as if we gathered Christian truth in threes, let us say—with the relevant sections on the Trinity, on the three main virtues, on the three chief disciples, and so on, and in sevens, with the seven deadly sins and all the other sevens, and so for other numbers. It seems mechanical and formal—a curious mode of hiving truth. Yet for memorizing it was valuable and the book has a real value still. It has been translated as far as the fours in two volumes for the Pali Text Society by Mr. F. L. Woodward, M.A., that expert scholar and translator—*The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya)*, vols. i. and ii. (Milford; 10s. each).

Long ago in 1913 Gooneratne published a translation (in part) at Galle, Ceylon, which is a serviceable work. But this newer one is not only in places closer to the original, but is throughout touched by a sense of style the other lacks.

There are interesting introductions by Mrs. Rhys Davids, in which she reiterates some of the views which for some years now she has been zealously propagating, and which are summed up in her recent Manual.

The Chief Rabbi, Dr. J. H. Hertz, tells the story of *The Battle for the Sabbath at Geneva* (Milford; 5s. net)—a story which is too little known, and which well deserves to be told. A proposal—engineered, according to Dr. Hertz, by American and financial interests—was set on foot in 1923 for the Reform of the Calendar, which, in practice, meant the introduction of a year of thirteen months of twenty-eight days each, with one 'blank' day over. It was over this 'blank' day that a series of battles was fought at Geneva from 1924 to 1931.

The blank day would obviously have disorganized the succession of the days of the week. The Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Lord's Day would have been 'floating' days; and this, besides the religious consequences, would have spelt material ruin to millions of conscientious Jews. Dr. Hertz tells with full detail the story of the long struggle for the retention of the Calendar as it is, and the eventual triumph, a struggle in which Sir John Baldwin, the representative of Great Britain and India, played a vigorous and honourable part.

*Delivering Grace*, by Mr. J. T. Mawson (Pickering & Inglis; 2s. net), contains a series of twenty brief addresses based on incidents in the history of Elisha the prophet. The titles are exceedingly apposite and suggestive, while the doctrine is

warmly evangelical. The writer is like Charles Spurgeon, who said that from whatever point he started he made straight across country to Jesus Christ. To those who do not trouble about critical and historical questions, but simply hunger for the word of God, this little book will be very welcome.

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*The Psychological Teaching of St. Augustine*, by the Rev. James Morgan, D.D. (Stock ; 7s. 6d. net), is a work of real scholarship on an interesting line of investigation. The lover of St. Augustine will have better appreciation of the outstanding ability of the great Bishop of Hippo after perusing this volume.

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'Edinburgh 1933' will, for very many students, be marked with a white stone, for it was the place and date of the ninth of these great quadrennial Conferences of the Student Christian Movement that have meant so much to many young men and women. In *The Christian Faith To-day*, edited by the Rev. Hugh Martin (S.C.M. ; 2s. 6d. net), we have some of the more memorable addresses delivered at the Conference. We have Canon Barry's, Dr. H. R. Mackintosh's, Dr. Oldham's,

and the Archbishop of York's, as well as others. The general subjects were 'The Christian Faith in the World' and 'The Christian Task in the World,' and these addresses were worth preserving and spreading. This book will provide a happy souvenir to many who were present at the Conference, and a not less happy inspiration for those of us who had not that privilege.

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The late Archbishop of Uppsala, the Right Rev. Nathan Söderblom, was a many-sided man—philosopher, scholar, musician, and saint. His death was a great loss to religion and to the communion of believers all over the world. As an act of piety to his memory, and as a gracious aid for 'holy week and other weeks,' the chapter from his great book 'The Story of the Passion of Christ' (the central chapter of the book) has been published under the title *The Mystery of the Cross* (S.C.M. ; 2s. net). It is translated by Mr. A. G. Hebert, M.A., of the Society of the Sacred Mission, and is a very helpful devotional exposition of the message of the Passion of Christ. The musician peeps out in the last section of the book, which is an exposition (and a delightful one) of the Passion music of Bach.

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## Missionary Problems of To-day.

### The Apologetic for Foreign Missions : A Preliminary Survey.

BY THE REVEREND NICOL MACNICOL, D.LITT., D.D., EDINBURGH.

THE time has certainly come when we should estimate anew for ourselves the authority that lies behind the call of the Church to foreign missionary service. The Moravians, the pioneers of the modern missionary movement within Protestantism, celebrated last August the two hundredth anniversary of the beginning of their enterprise. Many years had to elapse after that beginning before the Church of Scotland sent forth Alexander Duff as her first ambassador to the non-Christian world, and the centenary of his arrival in Calcutta fell just three years ago. The completion of one century or of two need not have any special spiritual significance, but the retrospect may well awaken the questioning instinct within us. Apart from the mere coincidence of events, it is the case that this is a time when the foundations upon which men's thinking rests seem to be giving way beneath their

feet and a new defence is required, not merely of foreign missions, but of religion itself. Many, however, whom this fundamental anarchy has not affected and who are able to hold still quite confidently to the Christian religion no longer feel assured that it has a right to the pre-eminence that they formerly gave to it. Various elements in modern life contribute to create this uncertainty. There are the vague views that are prevalent on all sides of us of 'evolution' and of 'relativity.' Even if we know little more of them than the words suggest, we suppose that they imply that everything, religion included, is in a condition of continual flux and that there is no truth that can be considered absolute or final. The study of history, too, and especially the comparative study of the history of the religions, has brought to view similarities in their development and in the truths they teach

which seem to bring them all down to much the same level and to forbid any claim to exclusive authority on behalf of any single one among them. The whole situation demands examination if the claim of Christianity to possess a truth which, because of its value and its uniqueness, must be preached to the whole world, is to be maintained, and if the hope of the coming of a time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ is not to dissolve in mist.

That a spirit is abroad even among those who believe themselves to be Christian that is having consequences of this character in their thinking in regard to Foreign Missions can hardly be doubted. But it is rather with an attitude of mind of another sort that we are concerned in this discussion. What we wish to consider is whether a change in the spirit and motive of those who hold to the missionary duty of the Church is demanded by the views that now obtain as to the great world religions, and whether there is a danger that any such change will diminish the power that has hitherto lain behind the discharge of that duty. If a real adjustment of attitude is demanded, can it be carried out without grave injury to the cause of Foreign Missions?

This reorientation that is said to be required by the Christian mind of to-day may be illustrated by the opinions expressed in an important Report that has been issued in America by a Commission of laymen who have, at the request of the leading missionary societies in America, conducted an inquiry into the value of Missions in the East. Under the title of 'Re-thinking Missions,' this Commission, of which Professor W. E. Hocking of Harvard was Chairman, have issued a detailed and weighty account of the results of their investigation. In their introductory chapters, dealing with general principles, they state their view of what the functions of the foreign missionary should henceforth be. They take note of changes that have come about during the last century and that affect missions. These are 'the altered theological outlook,' 'the emergence of a basic world culture,' and 'the rise of nationalism in the East.' 'What is the total incidence of these changes upon the work of Missions?' To this question they reply: 'The fundamental motive, the imperative of sharing whatever certainties we have in the field of religion, remains.' At the same time, they continue, 'the changes we have noted tend to lessen the apparent need, and certainly the insistent urgency of haste, of the work of the foreign preacher and evangelist.'

Further on, emphasizing the Church's need of such service as Foreign Missions have rendered, by whatever name it is called, the Report gives a fuller account of the value of that service as the members of the Commission conceive it. 'There can be nothing temporary in the need for the health of the Church that it have a permanent and ever-growing international function. The loss of the ideal of the Church universal and of the place of continued labour and sacrifice for that object would mean the sterility of the Church. On the other hand, the type of intercourse we view as permanent should mean not alone the continuous enlivening of the Churches at home and abroad through conversation with each other, but also the promotion of world unity through a spread of the understanding of the vital elements of all religion.' Still another passage may be quoted to make clear the conception that this Report presents of the kind of missionary and the kind of mission work that this new day requires. 'In whatever field he works the missionary is to live among men as an undiscouraged lover of their ideal interests, as well as of themselves: and in this way not to offer solutions, but to participate in solutions which, in the growing community of man, become increasingly co-operative tasks.'

This call to co-operation between the Christian missionary and the followers of the other religions which is to take the place of St. Paul's conception of an embassy in the name of God Himself, this call, that is, to share rather than to announce, certainly would seem to alter the emphasis of the message and the messenger. Whether it involves at the same time a lowering of the temperature of the Christian faith or whether this is what the normal temperature of a healthy Christian should be is not discussed by the Commission. They state their view and do not argue it. To come to a reasoned conclusion it would be necessary that we should consider with more fulness the source and character of such authority as the religions lay claim to, and should compare the values in life that each of them has actually in its history created. Such an examination is undoubtedly called for at the present time, but all that can be done here is to note some of the matters with which such a comparative study of the religions must be concerned. If we are to revise our conception of the place of foreign missions in the life of the Church and of the authority of Christianity as over against the other religions, we must do so, not as a consequence of an empiric survey of changes in the world about us, but as a conclusion based upon a reasoned and careful study

of the characteristics of the religions and the value of their influence. We must review with the utmost seriousness the apologetic for the missionary enterprise of the Christian Church.

If such an investigation is to be seriously undertaken, it will be well that we should begin by clearing our minds by the help of certain preliminary considerations of a general character. In the first place, it is well to make as definite as possible to our minds what in this connexion we mean by religion. Russian Communism, for example, is, it is affirmed, a new religion, and it is to be reckoned as such. It certainly possesses the main characteristics of what is usually meant by religion. It is, and claims to be, the central governing power in the emotional life of multitudes. It is, indeed, an anti-religion established as a religion and claiming authority in the same sphere. Much the same could be said of some of the extreme forms of nationalism. It is not, however, with such new religions as these that we are here concerned. By its denial of God and of the spiritual significance of human life, Russian Communism can be classed among those materialist world views which every spiritual religion is called upon by its very nature to oppose and resist. The religions, on the other hand, with which we are concerned are all on the side, in some sense or other, of God and a spiritual interpretation of the universe. They claim specifically to bring men to God and to bring to them by that means a spiritual deliverance. All the great historical religions belong to the same class as Christianity in the sense that they and it alike are religions of seekers, seeking some kind of deliverance from the ills of life by means that reach beyond the world of material things. Buddhism may appear to be an exception to this rule in view of its agnostic, and even atheistic characteristics, but this conception is superficial. It, too, is essentially a religion in the historic sense, in that it teaches an inward way to the breaking of the bondage of life and, in the words of Professor Pratt, 'an attitude to the Determiner of Destiny.' The modern materialistic religions are centrally religions of denial and exist by their rejection of the spiritual realities that the historic religions accept as axiomatic. The relation of Christianity to such systems can hardly be other than definitely hostile. Co-operation between them and it cannot be seriously contemplated.

Another exclusion that will obviously have to be made is that of the primitive or animistic religions. It is impossible for any serious person to agree with Mr. Gandhi that the followers of these religions of the lower culture should be left undisturbed among

their fears and tabus. All the higher religions are at one in their aim to find for men a way of escape from those very ills of which religions of the animistic type make their gods.

If we turn, then, to consider Christianity and the other religions that in various parts of the world claim men's allegiance in a similar sense to that in which Christianity claims it, we find that in the world of to-day there are many whose view of the relations of the religions to each other differs from that of earlier times. That relationship was one of unconcealed antagonism and rivalry. Each laid claim to men's allegiance on the ground that it was true and that the others were false. To-day there are many who, themselves professing one of these religions, adopt one or other of at least two attitudes towards the faiths that they formerly viewed as rivals. One common attitude, more or less frankly avowed, is that which declares for regional religion. Hinduism is good enough for the Hindus, Islam for the Arabs, Christianity for the white races. This is most often simply an evasion, adopted more or less consciously to conceal their selfish and predatory instincts or to justify their indifference. It is hardly compatible with any real monotheistic belief and, as the world contracts, it is becoming less and less possible for any one who thinks at all to hold it. In a world which is rapidly approaching the position of an ancient Greek city-state where each citizen was within hearing and sight of all his fellow-citizens, a unified spiritual allegiance is as natural and reasonable as a common acceptance of the laws of Nature. Regional religions will continue just as long as human selfishness and jealousies and rivalries rule among men. But if there are real contradictions between the religions they cannot all be accepted by honest men as true.

But the second method of reconciling the religions to one another that many now adopt is actually the acceptance of them all as equally true. There are, it is often maintained, no real contradictions separating them; they are diverse paths all leading alike to the same haven of truth. This is a position which can be seriously held only by those who interpret the universe in the terms of pantheism. Only a pantheism which, in the words of Baron von Hügel, 'flattens everything out,' bringing all life into identical relationship with the Whole, of which each individual is a part and an organ, could maintain such a thesis. Theism, with its emphasis upon personality in both God and man, is irreconcilably opposed to such an obliteration of distinctions. It would seem as if there was at least one real contradiction that no intellectual jugglery

could ever reconcile, that between a radical pantheism and an equally radical theism. Certainly it is impossible to contemplate an accommodation of any kind of Christianity with pantheism if pantheism can indeed be described in Baron von Hügel's words as 'in principle and incurably a supra-moral, a non-moral, and a non-personalist position within which there is really no place for a distinct and definite God, for sin, for contrition, for the sense of our being creatures, and for adoration.'<sup>1</sup> When we contemplate the issues that separate us as theists from a view of the universe that has such consequences as these we are compelled to say to it, 'Stand thou on that side for on this am I.'

In fact the argument, based upon the premisses of pantheism, that holds that all religions are equally true is soon discovered to be at the same time an argument that all religions are equally false or unreal. There is no room in such a doctrine for religion at all, except in the sense of a cosmic emotion. Religion in any sense that creates a missionary duty must be a source of spiritual succour and renewal, not, as the religion of pantheism can only be, the resigned acceptance of a static and frozen universe. Theism—and certainly Christian theism—is in its essence an evangel, a faith in a Power that can make a better world.

If, then, these short cuts to acquiescence in the religious *status quo* are unsatisfying, what is the deduction that follows? It obviously is that some religious systems are more in accord with the facts of things than others, and that among the ways by which men have sought God some are at least better than others, and it may be that one among them is best. If we survey them and consider how they may be placed in order of worth, it would appear that three tests at any rate can be applied to them, and that their relative significance can in some measure at least be adjudged accordingly. These tests are those of their universality, of their value, and of whether they possess an element that can be called divinely revealed, and so gives them a special authority.

First, it seems clear that no religion can be final which is not universal in its scope, seeking to include all things, to explain all things, and to make all things in some sense one. This can be done by denying difference, which is the way of pantheism or monism, or by referring all things to an ultimate supreme Reality who is their source, which is the way of theism. No other unification of the whole of things seems conceivable if it is to be compatible with what can be described as religion in any

spiritual sense of the word. But, as has already been affirmed, pantheism also, postulating a unity 'which is little more than a blank space,' can hardly be said to provide what religion seeks. To be 'hypnotized into unity'—to use Dr. Oman's description of what pantheism in this respect does<sup>2</sup>—is not to achieve the aim which underlies and evokes the demand for universality. That demand, in so far as it is religious, is due to dissatisfaction with the world of ordinary experience and to an unquenchable longing to reach a solution of its problems and tragedies and thereby to attain to peace and blessedness. The higher religions of the world cannot all, however, be relegated without qualification to the category of theism or pantheism. Thus, while Hinduism in some of its forms is the most thoroughgoing of pantheisms (acosmic monism), it has other forms which approximate to a monotheistic theism. Buddhism, again, has characteristics that make its classification similarly ambiguous. It may even be said of such theisms as Christianity and Islam that they have had phases in their history when pantheistic modes of thought and feeling seemed in danger of submerging them. At the same time it can be agreed that the religions that may be said to satisfy the first test are Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Muhammadanism, and Christianity. Both Hinduism and Buddhism, in so far as they are pantheisms, should, in this view, be excluded from any claim to an equal right with the theistic faiths to become the religions of mankind. It has also to be noted that they have within them elements of polytheism which are not reconcilable with this requirement.

The second test that we would apply to the religions is that of value. By that is to be understood the result in human life and character that the religions produce. It is not possible to examine here what these results are and their relative worth. One important group may be indicated. A religion may be ranked as higher or lower according to the strength of purpose that it creates in men for the realization of the good that is set before them. It is on the whole admitted that here, again, there is a marked contrast between theism and pantheism. The effect of the latter is to create apathy, what in the Middle Ages was called 'accidie,' a despairing acquiescence in things as they are. That that has been the fruit of such a religion as monistic Hinduism can hardly be denied, and, indeed, the desire to change this and 'to put iron into the blood' of the anaemic Hindu is an avowed aim of those who are seeking to revivify the old religion. It is true that

<sup>1</sup> Essays, ii. p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> Oman, *The Natural and the Supernatural*, p. 284.

Christianity also is not infrequently attacked as providing an opiate for men. If that is ever a true charge it would seem to lie chiefly against a Christianity which approximates to the Islamic view of a divine despotism and human impotence. A fatalism due to such a view of God and man has similar consequences to a pantheism that views all things as happening by a pre-determined necessity. If Christian theism is to deserve the highest place when judged by this test, that will only be if it is a theism fully Christian. What that qualification signifies cannot be discussed here, for behind it lies the Christian view of God and the Christian motive of the love that God has called forth in Christ Jesus.

This is, indeed, the test by which the authority of the Christian Mission will be vindicated to the world if it is vindicated at all. We have a plain right and duty to bring the Christian religion to men if it releases in them a power to deliver the world from evil and to create good such as no other religion, in fact, is able to do. Among the various elements within it that help to justify this claim is its eschatology, its promise of the creation of a new world, a Kingdom of God. A true theism with a really ethical conception of God at its heart would seem to demand this outlook. Such materialistic systems of to-day as scientific humanism—in some at least of its forms—may be classed along with the pantheistic religions as ultimately weakening human energy and purpose, for the reason that these theories exclude any real hope of the achievement of human betterment.

The third test that has been suggested is one that cannot carry full conviction except to the followers of the faith that claims to possess a revelation. At the same time Christians—and some of the adherents of other faiths as well—will be ready to recognize that God has revealed Himself beyond the bounds of His own faith as well as within it. It is the relative value of the different revelations that have come to men from a source beyond their own reach that is the real test here, and here again it is those within the religion—those who have received and experienced the spiritual manifestation—who alone can judge of its power and worth. To the Christian for whom the coming in history of Christ Jesus is the summit of the Divine revelation, the possession

inwardly of this crowning disclosure of God is the ultimate and sufficient warrant for the proclamation of this message to every member of the human race.

Apart, however, from this final and commanding conviction, a belief in a revelation—however made—would seem to be inseparable from belief in a God who is the source of good. ‘I was a hidden treasure,’ the Muhammadan represents Allah as saying, ‘and I desired to be known.’ That is the reason for the creation, and equally for every divine movement in human history. The difference between the missionary and the non-missionary religions surely lies here. The closed circle of the pantheist or of the modern humanist allows of no invasion of power from beyond man. If all we can do is to help one another by means of our own experience and our own strength there is too little of an evangel in such an outlook to create and sustain the missionary enterprise. This is the religion without enthusiasm of the eighteenth century, and it seems also to describe the scientific humanism of to-day. The Report of the American laymen, which has been already quoted, would seem to be affected by a similar mood. Their deity has a close resemblance to that of Professor Dewey, a God who is little more than ‘the possibilities of nature and associated living.’

That is not the conception of God which a living theism gives to us and, giving to us, constrains us to give to others. Apart altogether from the unique revelation which the Christian believes to have been granted in Christ, and of which he believes himself to be a steward, to believe in a God who is not merely a Great First Cause but ‘the Father of lights’ is to be constrained to lighten with His illumination the dimness of all men’s condition. Lord Balfour in his Gifford Lectures defines the God of his faith as ‘a God whom men can love, a God to whom men can pray, who takes sides, who has purposes and preferences, whose attributes leave unimpaired the possibility of personal relation between Himself and those whom He has created.’ Whoever believes in such a living God, be he a Christian or other than a Christian, must proclaim His message, and must proclaim it to every one capable of loving and worshipping such a God of love.

# Shakespeare and Miracle.

BY THE REVEREND JOHN LENDRUM, D.D., ELGIN.

I. SHAKESPEARE'S characters often use the word 'miracle' as loosely as we do—for anything that is regarded as very wonderful or highly surprising. Falstaff, after a boasted fight against heavy odds, says, 'I have 'scaped by miracle,' and, having had to be hidden for a while in a dirty-clothes basket, declares 'it was a miracle to 'scape suffocation' (1 K. H. IV., ii. 4; M. W. W., iii. 5). In the *Comedy of Errors* (v. 1), a man, challenged for a theft, bolts into an abbey, and, a few minutes later, is met walking along the street.

And then you fled into this abbey here,  
From whence, I think, you are come by miracle,

exclaims an angry and puzzled merchant. The thing was inexplicable; until it came out that there were two men in the case—twin brothers. So in the *Taming of the Shrew* (v. 1), a man makes his servant change parts with him, and all sorts of complications ensue; but, he explains at the end, it was all done in the pursuit of his love—'love wrought these miracles.' Belarius, in *Cymbeline*, iv. 2, uses a curious phrase:

I'm not their father; yet who this should be,  
Doth miracle itself, lov'd before me.

He cannot understand how the two boys he has brought up should be so strangely drawn to a stranger lad; it was to him a baffling mystery. In fact, the boys were sons of Cymbeline, and the stranger was their sister Imogen—in disguise. In *King John* (ii. 1), a marriage is suddenly proposed between the Dauphin and Lady Blanch, and he is asked what he has to say and told to look in her face:

I do, my lord; and in her eye I find  
A wonder, or a wondrous miracle,  
The shadow of myself form'd in her eye.

At once, he professes, he finds his other self in her, loves her at first sight.

Suffolk (1 K. H. VI., v. 3) is so struck by Margaret's beauty that he calls her 'nature's miracle'; and Hotspur's widow says of him (2 K. H. IV., ii. 3):

And him, O wondrous him!  
O miracle of men!

The Duke (*T. N.*, ii. 4) bids his messenger tell

Olivia that it is not her fortune or lands he cares for,

But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems  
That nature pranks her in attracts my soul.

When Benedick and Beatrice are slow to declare their love openly, love sonnets they have written to one another are produced; whereupon Benedick exclaims (*M. A. A. N.*, v. 4): 'A miracle! here' our own hands against our hearts.' Here 'miracle' probably means paradox. And that is certainly what it means on the lips of Bassanio (*M. V.*, iii. 2). Looking on the three caskets, he turns from those of gold and silver to that of lead; for, he says to himself, outward show is no sure clue to real worth within.

Look on beauty,  
And you shall see 'tis purchas'd by the weight;  
Which therein works a miracle in nature,  
Making them lightest that wear most of it.

That is—the showiest, the plumpest, the most richly dressed, are seldom the prettiest; those who have most of the outward show of beauty are apt to have least of the beauty that is real and true.

II. Elsewhere, however, in Shakespeare, and often, the word 'miracle' is used in its proper sense. A prince insists on marrying a shepherdess and fears the wrath of his father, but is assured by Camillo, a wise old councillor, that he knows of a way by which the matter can be arranged.

How, Camillo,  
May this, almost a miracle, be done?  
That I may call thee something more than man,  
And, after that trust to thee,

says the prince. How was this thing, impossible almost for mere man, to be done? (*W. T.*, iv. 4). *The Tempest* is a play full of magic and miracle. Ferdinand, the King's son and heir, had gone separated from the others at the time of the wreck and been given up as lost. Prospero (v. 1) draws the curtain and reveals him playing chess with Miranda not merely safe but in love and happy. 'A most high miracle!' exclaims Sebastian—very deftly put into the mouth of a villain who had been plotting against the King's life and had no wish to see the heir to the throne still alive. More truly sincere and pious are the earlier words of Gonzalo (ii. 1):

But for the miracle,  
I mean our preservation, few in millions  
Can speak like us.

They had been saved, he implies, by the special favour or interposition of God—a genuine miracle. Pericles (v. 3) is even more explicit; finding at last his long-lost wife, he longs, he says, to hear her story,

And who to thank,

Besides the gods, for this great miracle.

In *Lear*, iv. 6, when Gloucester, blinded and crazy, is determined to throw himself over a cliff into the sea, Edgar, humouring him, lets him roll down a grassy bank, and tries to put heart into him by declaring, ‘Thy life’s a miracle.’ What had happened, he goes on, was ‘above all strangeness’;

Therefore, thou happy father,  
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours  
Of men’s impossibilities, have preserv’d thee.

There are in *Lear* two other references to miracle, which, though slight, are of interest. Thrust in the stocks, Kent prays the sun to rise that he may see to read a letter which, he knows, is from Cordelia, and means that in some strange way she knew of his plight and was working for his rescue.

Nothing almost sees miracles  
But misery,

he says pensively (ii. 2). It is only those in trouble who see miracles—see the hand of God in any succour that comes to them. The prosperous are apt to take all the credit for their success to themselves, giving no glory to God. They do not need God, and do not think of Him; do not need a miracle, and so are very slow to believe in such a thing. But those in sore distress cry to God for deliverance; and when it comes, declare it an answer to prayer, a miracle. Shakespeare had grasped a truth often overlooked—that belief in miracle depends less on external evidence than on inward attitude. Some, the successful, the proud, the godless, would not believe, however weighty the evidence might be; others, the humble, the pious, will believe, even though the evidence be slight or insufficient. To say a thing is a miracle is not to state a fact but to give, and insist upon, a certain interpretation of a fact, and the way in which a man interprets a fact—whether or not, in a happy and surprising event, he will see the hand of God—will depend on his own mind and outlook. The same point is made in the miracle scene in *a King Henry VI.*, ii. 1, where, as King and courtiers enter the town, the people are crying,

‘A miracle! a miracle!’ a blind man having been cured at St. Alban’s shrine. The King, pious and humble, believes forthwith, praises God, and, when the man is brought before him, asks for his story, and says to him:

Poor soul! God’s goodness hath been great to thee;  
Let never day nor night unhallow’d pass,  
But still remember what the Lord hath done.

The courtiers, on the other hand, are entirely sceptical, and Gloucester soon proves the man an imposter—neither born blind nor lame, as he pretended; for, at a touch of the beadle’s whip, he leapt over a stool and took to his heels. The crowd are delighted and rush after the man, again raising the cry, ‘A miracle!’. The King is shocked and grieved; but the courtiers remain flippant, and even the Cardinal has to have his joke.

CARD. Duke Humphrey has done a miracle to-day.  
SUFF. True; made the lame to leap and fly away.  
GLOU. But you have done more miracles than I;  
    You made in a day, my lord, whole towns to fly.

Again, in *i King Henry VI.*, v. 4, Joan of Arc declares herself

Chosen from above,  
By inspiration of celestial grace,  
To work exceeding miracles on earth.

She had never, she says, had any commerce with evil spirits, as the Duke of York had insinuated, and, turning upon him, tells him he is so polluted by his lusts, stained with the blood of innocents and corrupted by a thousand vices, that he lacks the grace others have:

You judge it straight a thing impossible  
    To compass wonders but by help of devils.

It is only the pure in heart who see God—who in a happy event see the finger of God, a miracle. (And then follows the regrettable passage in which Joan is made, from fear of the stake, to plead she is with child, and York and Warwick are given the chance to sneer at a virgin birth, the latter saying to her :

The greatest miracle that e’er ye wrought,  
    Is all your strict preciseness come to this?)

As it is only the good who see miracles, so, as Joan suggested of herself, it is only the good who are given the power to work them. And this point is touched upon more fully in *Macbeth*, iv. 3. Malcolm and Macduff, who have fled into England, are watching a crowd gathering before the King’s palace, to be touched by the King for cure of ‘the

evil.' 'It is a most miraculous work in this good king,' says Malcolm ; for he cures the very worst, and

With this strange virtue,  
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy.  
And sundry blessings hang about his person  
That speak him full of grace.

III. The last of the three miracle passages in *Lear* (i. 1) introduces the age-long tension between faith and reason. The King of France finds it 'most strange' that Cordelia, her father's best beloved, should, in a trice of time, have become the object of his bitterest hate ; either the King's professed affection for her had suddenly withered, or she had been guilty of some monstrous offence—

Which to believe of her,  
Must be a faith that reason without miracle  
Could never plant in me.

Such was his faith in the goodness of Cordelia that reason without miracle could never make him believe evil of her. We think at once of the distinction, nowadays somewhat blurred, between truths reached by reason and truths that could never have been known to men had they not been revealed—revealed by the act of God, by a miracle ; and also of the old argument for Christ's divinity, built upon His miracles, without which, it was implied, reason could never have implanted such belief in us.

In Shakespeare's day seemingly, as in our own, there were those who were sceptical of alleged miracle and tried to explain it away as brought about by natural causes. Of such rationalizing, there is a passing hint in *Troilus and Cressida*, v. 4. Thersites, cynical and scurrilous, has been watching a fight between Troilus and Diomedes, rivals in love, and then loses sight of them.

What's become of the wenching rogues ? I think they have swallowed one another. I would laugh at that miracle ; yet, in a sort, lechery eats itself.

Were he told they had swallowed one another, he would laugh such an idea to scorn ; and yet, after all, such a miracle would not be wholly irrational, since evil never lasts, but sooner or later destroys itself. In the beginning of *Henry V.* the Archbishop of Canterbury speaks of the marvellous change that had taken place in Henry since he became King—from wildness and riot to sobriety and wisdom. The Bishop of Ely suggests that Henry's wisdom, though hidden by his wildness, had yet been growing and ripening all the time,

like the strawberry beneath a nettle, or summer grass in the night. The Archbishop readily agrees :

It must be so ; for miracles are ceas'd ;  
And therefore we must needs admit the means  
How things are perfected.

And doubtless Shakespeare chuckled gently to himself as he put such rationalizings in the mouths of eminent churchmen. Henry himself is more simple in his piety, after his great victory exclaiming :

O God ! thy arm was here ;  
And not to us, but to thy arm alone,  
Ascribe we all . . .

. . . Take it, God,  
For it is none but thine ! (iv. 8).

Last, and most interesting perhaps of all, are the two references to miracle in *All's Well That Ends Well*. At ii. 1 Helena appears before the King of France, offering to cure him of his malady by means of a secret prescription left to her by her father, a famous physician. The King says that, all the doctors having declared his case hopeless, he could not with any dignity turn credulously to a quack ; but Helena replies :

He that of greatest works is finisher  
Oft does them by the weakest minister ;  
So holy writ in babes hath judgment shown,  
When judges have been babes ; great floods have flown  
From simple sources ; and great seas have dried  
When miracles have by the greatest been denied.

The King still refuses, and bids her go, but she persists :

Inspired merit so by breath is barr'd ;  
It is not so with Him that all things knows,  
As 'tis with us that square our guess by shows ;  
But most it is presumption in us when  
The help of heaven we count the act of men.

And when she declares herself so confident of curing him that, if she fails, she is ready to forfeit her life, the King is impressed and won, and agrees to let her try.

Methinks in thee some blessed spirit doth speak,  
His powerful sound within an organ weak ;  
And what impossibility would slay  
In common sense, sense saves another way.

That a weak girl should succeed where all the doctors had failed was to common sense a thing impossible and absurd ; yet somehow there was something in her which, spite of reason, captured his faith and made him believe in her ; by a sense

finer than common sense, he felt there was something in her of truth and even of God. There are those who remain unimpressed by the miracles of Jesus, yet are won to faith by His personality and words of grace and faithfulness unto death.

At ii. 3, the King completely cured and all the court talking of it, Lafeu, a shrewd old lord, says :

They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons, to make modern and familiar, things supernatural and causeless. Hence is it that we make trifles of terrors ; ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.

Lafeu is old and old-fashioned. In the good old days, he reflects, people had faith and believed in miracles and portents ; but nowadays they say miracles are past, and no one believes in them. Our rationalists take things supernatural and causeless and make them out to be no more than modern

and familiar—not at all miraculous, but due to natural causes and just as common and ordinary as things that happen any day among ourselves. We moderns have no sense of awe, making light of terrors and laughing at portents ; we think we know everything and imagine ourselves safe against the intrusion of the supernatural ; whereas were we wise, we should believe and tremble. Lafeu is an old-fashioned believer in miracle. To be given up by the doctors and then to be cured—that, he declares, is ‘a novelty to the world,’ ‘a showing of a heavenly effect in an earthly actor,’ ‘the very hand of heaven.’

Is it not a striking thing that the question of miracle should turn up so often in Shakespeare’s plays ? In his day, as in ours, there were believers and there were doubters, and he was aware of both, and understood both, and loved both. And therein we have part of the secret of his greatness. Yet, on the whole, his heart is with the believers.

## In the Study.

### *Virginibus Puerisque.*

#### The Other Side of the Wall.

BY THE REVEREND PHILIP E. PEGG, CHESTER.

‘ He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus.’—2 Co 4<sup>14</sup> (R.V.).

ONCE upon a time there was a country where the people had a very good King and lived very happily. No one had ever seen the King, and different people had different ideas about where He lived. But they all knew that He was a good King, because of all the lovely things that He had provided for them in their country.

Round the borders of this country there was a very high wall, so high that no one had ever been able to climb to the top and see what was on the other side. At one place in the wall there was a thick and heavy door. Built around this door there was a porch in which there lived the doorkeeper, so it was said, although nobody had ever seen him. If anybody wanted to leave the country they would first have to go to the porch ; the doorkeeper would let them in and then close the door, and then he would open the big heavy door in the wall and let them out. But no one who had entered the porch and gone through the

big door had ever come back again to tell the people what it was like on the other side of the wall.

The wise men who lived in that country used to talk about the wall and the door and the porch, and often told stories of what they thought happened when any one went through the porch. Some of them said that their country was the only country there was, and that there was nothing on the other side of the wall—no country, no flowers or birds or people, or anything like that. People who went through the door in the wall just stopped living ; their bodies crumbled to dust, and that was the end. Others said that there was a country on the other side of the wall, but it was a very different country from theirs—everybody in it was asleep. The people who went through the big door in the wall just fell asleep and went on sleeping for ever and ever. That was why no one ever came back.

So it went on for years and years, and all the time people were leaving the country and going through the great door in the wall to the other side. Whenever they went it was always because they had received a message from the King telling them to go. Sometimes the message came to an old man or an old lady, and then they didn’t mind so much, because they had lived in the country for a long time and had been able to enjoy all the lovely

things that the King provided for His people. But sometimes the message came to a little boy or girl, and that made the people sad. They couldn't understand why the King should want to send little boys and girls to the other side of the wall when there was so much for them to enjoy on their side of it. Sometimes the message would come to a mother or father, and although they did not want to go, and many of them were afraid to go, the King's message had to be obeyed, and they had to say good-bye to all their loved ones and go to the porch and then out through the big door. But no one ever came back to tell the people what it was like on the other side of the wall.

Now, although no one had ever seen the King, some of the people had seen the King's Son, who lived in one part of the country. Most of the people who met Him loved the King's Son, because He was such a good man. He was always doing lovely things, helping poor people, and healing those who were sick. The children especially loved Him, because He used to tell them beautiful stories and never sent them away when He came to where they were playing. The King's Son also told the people about His Father. He said that the King lived on the other side of the wall, and no one need ever be afraid when the message came to them to go through the big door in the wall, because on the other side there was a country much more beautiful than the one in which they were living, a country where everybody was happy all day long.

Then one day the news came that the King's Son had had to go out of the country through the big door in the wall. Many of the people were very, very sad when they heard this news, because they had lost the best Friend they had ever had, and some said that life was hardly worth living now the King's Son had been taken from them. Before He had left them the King's Son had said that He would come back in three days' time, but nobody believed Him. Three days afterwards the news went round that the King's Son had come back from the other side of the wall, and His friends were glad again, because they knew now that it was true what the King's Son had said—that on the other side of the wall there was a country far, far lovelier than the one in which they were living, and all their friends and loved ones who had been sent by the King through the great door were perfectly happy.

The name of the King was God; the name of the country was Earth; the name of the great door in the wall was Death; and the name of the King's Son was Jesus. On the first Good Friday Jesus

went through the porch called the Grave and out through the great door Death, and His friends thought they had lost Him for ever. But on the first Easter Sunday Jesus came back again, and now we know that we need not be afraid of death, because it is only a gateway into a country more lovely and beautiful than the one in which we live now.

### St. George and your Dragons.

BY THE REVEREND GORDON HAMILIN, B.A., CARDIFF.

' . . . More than conquerors through him that loved us.'—Ro 8<sup>v</sup>.

Flags are flying all over England on April the 23rd. I expect most of you know the reason why—it is St. George's Day. He is the patron saint of England, and there is a picture of him slaying the dragon on three of our coins. I wonder if you know which they are? Two of them are gold and one is of silver.

Now, who was this St. George? Are the stories about him make-believe, or was he a real man? He was a brave officer in the Roman army who became a Christian in the days of the Emperor Diocletian. A fierce persecution broke out against all the Christians, and this brave soldier refused to give up his faith in Jesus. He died a martyr's death. Stories about him were probably brought to England by the first missionaries who came to us from Rome. Long ago, as early as the thirteenth century, he became the patron saint of our land, and St. George's Channel is named after him.

But what about that dragon? That monster stands for the might arrayed in cruelty against St. George. In our New Testament, Rome, the persecutor, is called a dragon (look it up in Rev 12). But although the dragon is a symbol, the fight was real enough. If St. George had refused to face the dragon, no flags would be flying for him on April the 23rd.

We all have to meet dragons! They bar our way; they do their best to frighten us; they try to drag us down into the mire. For instance, there is that big dragon named DIFFICULTY. How he glares at us, trying to make us turn back. There is only one thing to do: that is, what St. George did. We must tackle that dragon; for if we do not destroy him, then he will destroy us. When we face him, and come to grips with him, and set our teeth determined not to give in, we shall soon find, just as St. George did, that every dragon has a weak spot. That big bullying ogre DIFFICULTY came roaring into the path of our dauntless

pioneer Dr. Barnard. Although he was giving his life to save poor and homeless boys and girls, yet enemies did their best to hinder him. They even dragged him to the police court. But he faced the dragon. He came to grips time after time with that huge but cowardly monster DISMISSESS. And he won, and won splendidly. That is why we honour him so much.

There is another dragon who tries to make us wane and pity ourselves and run away. His name is LIL-HEART. He tried to scare Robert Louis Stevenson, and spoil all his plans. But R.L.S. showed how much can be done when a brave heart is within a weak body. It was because he faced his dragon, and fought out and won, that he has left us such rattling stories as *Treasure Island* and *The Heidi Arrow*. The same dragon crawled into the way of Frances Kester Gaskell, who wrote so many of our lovely hymns. She used to say: 'People are sorry for me; but I am not sorry for myself.' What a big boy that is.

One of the worst dragons is TEMPTATION. This beast lives in a miser's house, evil-thinking and ever the demons raging forth to meet us and tries to drag us down into the nether world. And, he overcame one of the men who wrote our Bible! Listen to this defeated and miserable man: 'Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin . . . wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow . . . blot out all mine iniquities . . . create in me a clean heart, O God.' Oh dear! So there he was covered with nasty suds. See that dragon like all the others has a weak spot. We must see him and fight him with courage and power. Let us make sure that we are well equipped for the battle by putting on the whole armour of God. Let us keep our sword sharp, and our shield bright. Then we are ready. That dragon TEMPTATION will not take us by surprise. No, we shall be sure to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.'

## The Christian Year.

### EASTER DAY.

#### The Faith of Easter.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.—Col. 3:1.

For as Easter is the fact that Christ is risen, that in His death He found Himself, found the eternal significance and reality of all He had been, that through the grave and gate of death He entered into eternal and perfect union with God,

and through that union with God is now and for ever one with Him; it was a moment in former life, its supreme source and creative spirit. For us it is a necessary act of faith, an act of faith almost as necessary and inscrutable for the soul as is the act of breathing for our lungs, that Christ must have risen, that He could not be bounden of death. For our sins makes that act a necessity in so far as it works with God, tells where God wills that God has already in certain of eternal matters to work. It knows that He is not expressing a mere personal purpose, that it is not working for mere personal ends, that it is not testing or proving personal submissions. It is sure, with a certainty which it does not gain from outside but which is given it itself, in its own vital communion with God, that an eternal purpose is working in and not in that an eternal end is being somehow subservient to its activities, that the satisfaction the world it creates is a satisfaction of needs which are not in God and the whole world of spirit. And the love of substance, of conscious dependence in all our activities on God, does not need to support its aims by a mere magnification of certain doctrinal decisions of the Gospels. It finds in the gospel as a whole the figure of One who was its own supreme type and instrument. Its true idea that The love of Conscience could not be 'believe in Jesus,' that there was nothing left us it which belonged to the world that Jesus can touch, is immediate and irrefutable. Christ is risen.

But that Easter faith must come nearer home to us. It is not limited for us till we know ourselves risen with Christ. It is in the here and now of every passing generation that the Kingdom of God is fully accomplished. It is true of a moment at least, but of all time. Our faith in it is vain if we are yet in our sins, if we live concerned with the life of sense, aims, of meat and drink, of poor suggestions. It is vain if the Federal has not come to be the soul, the consciousness of our life purpose, to all we do and are. It may seem an impossible idea. The things we do are of such poor significance that it seems but a great and self-deception to imagine about our acts of virtue or vices which can be called eternal. We are growing in offices among files of dusty papers, managing well a mere mechanism, still measuring values of figures at the dictation of an unseen will. Or we are ourselves the dictators of that life of action, of the necessities of our fellow-men. We are setting beyond a doubt of having a root in a life which has no necessities at all in the life of man. Our whole care is centered on the artificially built up whose soul makes

up the only magnitudes we know. How, we think, can such things find any place in a system of eternal values? How can they matter to God? It is our own innate sense of the eternal, fitful and inadequate as it is, that fills us at times with an utter weariness of these things and brings home to us their essential insignificance. We cherish visions of an order in which they will be unnecessary, in which every human toil will have become magically interesting. But is it the case that we need such deliverance? Is it not a certain vulgarity in our imaginations that is seeking the refuge of an imaginary order from the real world in which we must find the measures of eternity if we are to find them at all? The simplest duties are part of a real order which is building up the human temple, which is laying deep and wide and strong the physical foundations on which it rests, which is strengthening its walls with cement of blood and tears and sweat of body and soul that within those walls the great spiritual ministries may endure. Without these unnecessary labours that sustain man's body and all his bodily needs, that give those needs perhaps a greater scope and urgency with each generation, where would be the growing triumphs, ardours, enjoyments of his spirit? We know well how his spirit has striven and strives to-day for the things that endure, how it has witnessed to them and witnesses to them to-day, with a very minimum of either demand or satisfaction for the needs of the body. Yet what we call civilization is an element in all corporate spiritual growth. The increasing mastery of Nature is a triumph of spirit and a contribution to spirit. And if the growth of civilization at its lowest, of mere material mastery, means an increased specialization of our human functions, an apparent disintegration of human interests, let us remember that it is not really so, that we are really engaged in making a civilization at its highest, an increased spiritual mastery.

That is the faith in the risen life, the faith that the eternal is here, that in our most ordinary activities we are inevitably its instruments and only come to ourselves as we become its conscious and most loyal ministers. It is the faith that all that we do can and does create eternal values. But it is more than that. It is the faith that what we do reveals its most immediate effects in what we are becoming. There, in the inner world of character, the eternal is already ours. Whatever the outer result of our activity may be, the power that it makes is of eternal moment to the world. The world, we feel, lives by its soul, and our character

is of its soul. For that soul of the world is always in the making.

And all the life of that world of spirit is eternal, that which is in the making equally with that which is unchangeably itself, that which is in the making because it can come to be only in so far as it is rooted in and nourished by that which is. Religion through every variety of change has held to that inveterate faith. It is that faith native in man universally, abiding in him against all the might of appearances, that makes man naturally a religious being. The faith has been always the same, in its crudest form as in its most refined and developed, the faith that in whatever man is doing he is working out for and in himself an eternal hell or an eternal heaven, an eternal discontent and self-torture or an eternal satisfaction, the faith that the issues of life are declared in the quality of life and that those issues must somehow be eternal because that quality is immediately felt by us as eternal. That is the reason why faith in the Risen Christ depends upon no laborious marshalling of historical evidences, but in an immediate native certainty of the soul. Being what He was, what the gospel reveals Him to the dullest, He could not be holden of death. Man's faith in himself proclaims that Christ is risen and that we must be risen in Him or else we are not yet in any satisfying sense ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

I know

There is no death, 'tis but a phantom fear  
That haunts the soul apart from God.

Christ Rose.

The stone was rolled away, and echoing,  
His voice startled Death's sentry guards.

'Behold,

I live for ever, and have cast the keys  
Of Hell into the bottomless abyss.  
Lift up your heads, ye golden gates, for all  
To enter in who will to walk the Way.  
Christ lives, and round the living Christ new worlds  
Burn to their birth in light, new triumph songs  
Make music mid the silent stars, and swell,  
Like ocean's thunder on a sounding shore,  
Life! Life! More Life! Christ lives for evermore.'<sup>2</sup>

#### FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

*Life's Responsibility.*

'The signs of the times.'—Mt 16<sup>a</sup>.

If we are to do any sort of serious thinking about the time in which we live, it is clear that we must

<sup>1</sup> A. L. Lilley, *Nature and Supernature*, 233.

<sup>2</sup> G. A. Studdert-Kennedy, *Songs of Faith and Doubt*.

cut our way through to the essential and defining meanings of the age.

As one watches the passing show there are, to be sure, many indications of the typical thought and action of the period from which we are just passing. A little while ago the mechanistic interpretation of matter and life spoke with a self-confidence which was little less than regal. And there are no end of people who believe that they possess cultivated minds who still bow down before the mechanical as the final. Such blunt sentences as that in which Sir James Jeans declared at Cambridge University a little more than a year ago that mechanism had shot its bolt, must prove very startling to those who have sold all their idealisms at the command of a mechanistic determinism which is already becoming decadent. To be sure, it did seem for a period that, to use a phrase of Emerson, 'things are in the saddle and ride mankind.' Men were only puppets in a determined world. The view was set forth with intellectual distinction and literary grace by Thomas Hardy. It was set forth with coarse vulgarity by Theodore Dreiser. And there were hosts and hosts of others. But even more as an atmosphere than as a formal interpretation of life determinism was subtly and potently present everywhere.

The observer of the passing show of thoughts sees much of another feature which is likewise a hangover from the period just behind us. For there are still machines to the right of us, machines to the left of us. And there are machines above us. Whether we are to regard the universe itself as a vast machine is more and more open to question. But the presence of incalculable numbers of machines in the world of our constant experience no one can deny. Once in a while some one tries to estimate what these machines have really done to us. Mr. Arthur Pound in *The Iron Man in Industry* has confronted one aspect of the problem with results for his own thinking which are dark and tragic enough. Mr. Stuart Chase in *Men and Machines* has tried to view the whole problem in a large and comprehensive way. And while he tries to say a good word for the whirring machines, it is evident that the spectacle of a billion wild horses set loose among us is one which he finds startling if not indeed terrifying. Can we use machines without becoming machines? This is the fundamental and searching question. Can the makers of machines remain persons while they work? Is automatic industry the inevitable foe of all those great values which we associate with the personal life? Will the machine age beget

generations of 'robots' where we once had men? Will the sense of speed developed by the high-powered automobile and the airplane make men incapable of thinking in terms of destination? Will they be content to move rapidly without asking any questions as to direction or as to goal?

When Sir James Jeans says that modern physicists are coming by a very different path to conclusions not dissimilar to those of Berkeley, we feel that great doors are indeed opening. And when Sir Arthur Eddington is ready quite frankly to admit that our conceptions of the physical world are essentially symbolical and that consciousness is the indubitable reality, we feel that a great scientist is facing problems, which scientists have not always met with such clear analysis and such unhesitating candour. It really seems odd that we should have been so obsessed by the uniform relations the physical and biological scientists discovered, that we should have ignored the importance of the free-moving, darting intelligence which discovered these uniformities. When we once have seen that the cool and clear intelligence of the scientist is more fundamentally important than any formula whose working power he discovers, we have entered a new world of critical insight. Then we begin to realize how entirely right Sir James Jeans was when he declared that mechanism had shot its bolt. Only we are not quite sure that it ever really had a bolt to shoot. If we had taken the trouble to understand the scientist and his own processes of creative thought we should never have been very much worried about the mechanical interpretation of the universe. The scientist himself is the rock upon which all deterministic systems break.

Then as we listen to the whir of all the machines of this machine age we turn from the automobile to the driver and from the airplane to the pilot. In each case we have a fascinating mechanism used for his own purposes by a free mind, the free mind of the driver, the free mind of the pilot. It is the driver who determines directions. It is the pilot who turns his machine toward Brussels or toward Paris when he leaves London. Indeed, both the driver and the pilot live at the very spot where freedom and necessity meet. The free mind directs the uniformities whose formulas it has mastered, and so the machines become the slaves of freedom. The world of responsibility may seem to disappear when we consider an automobile. It triumphantly returns when we think of the driver. The world of free energy may seem to vanish when we consider an airplane. It trium-

phantly returns when we consider the pilot. And as one thinks of pilots and drivers one is perplexed that one should ever have been caught in the bog of mechanism. And when one thinks of the inventor of the machine it seems incredible that one ever failed to see that personality free and responsible is on the throne from the beginning of the whole process to the very end.

The world in which we see that scientists and inventors and drivers and pilots are more important than the uniformities they discover and the machines they construct and use, is a world in which we are ready really to think of the human values. There is good ground for believing that as the century behind us was an age of great machines the century before us will be an age of great persons. At least we may have it so if we will.<sup>1</sup>

For generations we have been attending to economic results, and leaving human results to take care of themselves. But to-day we realize that, if the choice must be made, we ought to do the exact opposite. For we are beginning to understand at last the burden of that eloquent prophet whom God sent to rebuke England for her worldliness and secularity : 'There is no wealth but Life—Life including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings.' Civilization, said Baron Liebig half a century ago, is economy of power, and English power is coal. Civilization, retorted Ruskin, is the making of civil persons. 'And English power is by no means coal, but, indeed, of that which

When the whole world turns to coal  
Then chiefly lives.'

The same principle has its application to ethics as well as to economics. Nay, it enters into the substance and fibre of ethics, which can never be reduced to a subject of abstract speculation. Germany may admonish us on this point : 'In no country is psychology more studied, and in no country is human nature less understood.' To-day we have begun to revolt against the tyranny of abstractions and to take refuge once more among the children who are partakers of flesh and blood. We used to argue in an abstract way about the British army, until we learned to talk fondly and proudly of 'our men at the front.' That change is the symbol of a spiritual conversion. For it is the one grand characteristic of Christianity that

it translates abstractions into personalities. After all is said, good and evil are mere names unless they stand for personal qualities. Right and wrong have no proper moral meaning except when they describe the relations between persons. And the essence of immorality lies in treating a living person as if he were no better than a thing. Slavery is hateful because it involves dealing with human beings as though they were chattels. We do despite to God when we take a fellow-creature, made in God's image, and turn that fellow-creature into the mere instrument of our own profit or our own self-indulgence.

To a Christian, things are of no account compared with persons ; they have worth only as they subserve persons. Our religious organizations and institutions are all means to an end ; they become useless, they may even become harmful and poisonous, unless they minister to the spirits of living men. Our theology grows vital when it turns away from abstractions and goes back into partnership with flesh and blood. It may almost be said that a man's Christianity is tested by the way in which he regards faces in the street. Browning's biographer has described how the poet looked at the fellow-creatures he met. To him, each one of them wore some expression, some blend of eternal joy and eternal sorrow, not to be found in any other countenance. He was hungrily interested in all human beings, but it would have been quite impossible to say of Browning that he loved humanity. He did not love humanity, but men. His sense of the difference between one man and another would have made the idea of melting them all into a lump called humanity simply loathsome and prosaic. For Browning 'believed that to every man that ever lived on this earth has been given a definite and peculiar confidence of God.'<sup>2</sup>

#### THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

##### First Things First.

'To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.'—I S 15<sup>22</sup>.

This is a priceless bit of spiritual history, full of wonderful insight into the strange perversity of the human heart ; full of humour, too, for we are funny creatures when we try to fool God.

There are few stories, and there is perhaps no figure in all history, so tragical as that of Saul ; the man who had so many chances and who never seemed able to take them, who had somehow the knack, amounting almost to genius, of doing the

<sup>1</sup> L. H. Hough, *The University of Experience*, 15.

<sup>2</sup> T. H. Darlow, *Holy Ground*, 146.

wrong thing. There is no man in the Bible who so often said, 'I have sinned.' Not that he was ever really sorry. It meant little more than an intimation of the fact, as if he said to himself, but without regret, 'Wrong again!' 'Saul the mistake,' as Browning called him. 'Saul the failure.' The Bible speaks of him as one of God's mistakes! Again and again we are told that 'God repented having made him king over Israel.'

Some will say that Saul was not really responsible; that he was forced into a position for which he was not fitted, made to bear responsibility for which he was not able; that, by force of circumstances, the course of his life was twisted into ominous turnings. They may quote George Eliot's saying that 'Character is not the whole of destiny; circumstances have also to be reckoned with, which more often than not tell out the tale.' It is true that circumstances have to be reckoned with, and it is only when we have the character to reckon with them that we have any chance at all against them. Character may not be the whole of destiny, for intelligence also counts. A man may be good but stupid. John Buchan recently drew attention to the fact that Bunyan made all his great leaders—Mr. Greatheart, Mr. Valiant-for-Truth—to be men not only of character, but also of intelligence. They were men who used their minds. Others, who were good but stupid, he made to be followers, not leaders. Saul was not equal to leadership, not from lack of intelligence, but from lack of character. He had nobility of nature and generous instincts. Yet these were the very qualities in which he came to be completely lacking. Most of us are generous because we feel we can afford to be. We may be free from jealousy only because no one has ever stood in our way. Saul never knew jealousy until David appeared. The roots were doubtless there; or, as we would say, the tendency. He tried to implicate others and to shield himself, so as to escape the consequences of his own action. God, through His prophet, had asked him to deal with a certain situation. It was a very painful thing for any man to be asked to do; but do not let us get side-tracked by raising questions as to the ethics of this command to exterminate Amalek.

We know what Amalek stands for. It stands for all in our nature that is still a temptation to us; all that makes our complete deliverance and sanctification from sin difficult, if not impossible. The word that came to Saul is the word that comes to us, to destroy Amalek root and branch. Nothing must be spared; the good must go with the bad, the good that is not good enough. Up to a point

we act on God's command, but we leave a large margin for our own reluctance. We take sides with our own nature against God. It is really the most subtle form of self-deception, and none but the Holy Spirit can help us to see where we stand. It was because the Holy Spirit had departed from Saul that he could not even see where he had gone wrong. He said, 'I have sinned,' but he had no real regret, no repentance. He quite easily justified himself. He refused to justify God. I remember a sentence from one of Principal Rainy's prayers: 'We have justified ourselves and refused to justify Thee: we have forgiven ourselves and refused to be forgiven by Thee: we have added yet this to all our sin, that we have approved of all our sin.'

Did not the end justify the means? Saul spared the best of the sheep and oxen in order to sacrifice them unto the Lord. He made religion a cloak for his disobedience. We give any old reason as an excuse for holding on to what we know must go. We often make ourselves believe that we have made a complete response, that there is nothing more that God can possibly expect of us; which just means that we fix the limits of our obedience and leave a wide margin for doing our own pleasure. That is what we often do, and it does not need a prophet to tell us whether and in what particular we have done wrong. Any one who knows his own heart, to whom God speaks, can tell us where we are wrong, without our speaking a single word. Of course, Samuel was an expert at getting guidance. He began at a very early age to listen to the voice of God, and now that he was old he had the insight of experience, the knowledge of intuition, as well as that of direct revelation. He knew all that had happened on this occasion. When Saul was brought face to face with the prophet he tried to wriggle out of his responsibility by blaming others—'the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen and the fatlings, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God.'

It was then that Samuel spoke this great word: 'Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' In other words, the only right that we have to exercise before God is the right of obedience. No other right that we may claim to exercise—the right of private judgment or of worshipping God as we please—can take the precedence of this prior claim of God on our obedience. It is about the last thing that we are ready to give, but it is the first thing that He demands. We excuse ourselves by pleading that we are not always clear as to how we should act.

How can we be clear as to the journey on which the Lord will send us, when we refuse to take the first step ; or, when we start off with a mental reservation as to how far we shall go ? We cannot take any step of this road until we are ready to take every step. We are committed to the end in the beginning.

O Jesus, I have promised  
To serve Thee to the end.

This is the meaning of faith. The keynote of faith is obedience, not belief. Obedience is the prerequisite of clear vision and knowledge of God's will.

Are we ready to obey all that may be revealed to us ? Or are we afraid to go all the way with the destroying of things that are dear to us and bound up with us ? They may in themselves be quite good things, and for that reason we are so tempted to spare them. Our prejudices, for instance—our religious and ecclesiastical prejudices. We have been brought up to worship God in a certain way, and it is not always easy to be tolerant of any other way. Or, it may be our national prejudices. We have been born into a certain national tradition, with a background of history, which has determined our ideas, political or racial. These things in themselves may be quite good things, but they may easily stand in our way of obeying the will of God. Or, again, there are things quite definitely bad that we try to spare just out of sheer, wilful self-indulgence—things that we have set our hearts upon and which we cannot find it in our hearts to destroy ; things that are not good in themselves at all, and certainly not good for us. We try to rationalize our most inveterate habits. We surround them with all sorts of supposed 'convictions' to protect and spare them from destruction ; when all the time we ought to be subjecting them to ridicule, or tearing them out by the roots. When Diabolus and all his forces were driven out of the city of Mansoul, he presented a petition to Immanuel that he might have only a small part of the city ; when this was rejected, he begged to have only a little room within the walls. But Immanuel answered, 'He shall have no place in it at all—no, not to rest the sole of his foot.'

Are we keeping something in reserve for a special act of sacrifice, which, in the meantime, will help to comfort us for the things we have destroyed ? Do not let us reserve anything, no matter for what high and holy purpose, that God has marked out for destruction. We may be waiting for guidance to make a complete surrender in every particular,

but that is not the way we come to learn the will of God and do it. 'Overdone solicitude to discover God's will means unwillingness to listen at once to conscience,' says Marcus Dods. We must act on the knowledge we have and by the light we have. We must go all out to destroy the thing that lies nearest, which we know to be a difficulty, which we know to be a sin, and then our next step will become plain. If we cannot give Christ our obedience, we need not try to worship Him, for that is only giving a religious cloak to our sin. He wants the gold of our obedience. That is how to worship Him in the beauty of holiness, in spirit and in truth.<sup>1</sup>

### THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

#### What is Religion ?

'I will not leave you comfortless : I will come to you.'—Jn 14<sup>10</sup>.

One of the acutest minds of our time has recently suggested a somewhat novel and startling definition of religion : *Religion is what the individual does with his solitariness.*

If we were asked what religion was, we should probably hesitate, and then go on to identify it with church attendance ; corporate worship ; good behaviour ; a strict adherence to a high moral standard of life ; the avoidance of the grosser sins ; belief in God ; trust in the Saviour, and so on. Who amongst us, however, would identify it with solitariness and maintain that if we were never solitary we were never religious ? Yet, if we allow ourselves to ponder the implications of this new definition, we shall recognize a profound truth in it. We shall recognize the truth of Professor Whitehead's contention that the great religious conceptions which haunt the imaginations of civilized mankind are scenes of solitariness ; Prometheus chained to his rock, Muhammad brooding in the desert, the meditations of the Buddha, the solitary Man on the Cross.

To be alone ; to be by ourselves ; to enter into the silence which can be felt ; to realize the intense and awful loneliness of human existence. There are so many people who are afraid of the consciousness of themselves. They must be in company. It is the herd instinct. They are moved by an unknown fear and seek to stifle it by plunging into the crowd.

What do we do with our solitariness ? The answer in too many cases is simply that many do nothing with it. They never succeed in attaining to the state of isolation. They fear to enter into the

<sup>1</sup> E. Macmillan, *Seeking and Finding*, 17.

possession of their own souls. They halt upon the threshold of self-possession and flee away to the comfort of the companionship of their fellow-men. And in doing so they avoid that awful contact with reality which is the very nerve of the truly religious life. They fall short of the realization of the great truth that ultimately we are alone. There is a principle of individuation running through the whole created universe, exemplified in the minute differences which distinguish even the electrons one from the other, and finding its highest and most marked expression in the sphere of human life. Experience, in whatever direction we examine it, bears upon it this unmistakable stamp of uniqueness. My experience is *mine* and cannot, in that sense, be a shared experience with another. Hence our sad recognition of the truth that in relation to our brethren, however near of kin they may be to us, we are onlookers in their struggles; external observers of their joys and fears, and left ultimately to ourselves in the passage from time to eternity.

This is our solitariness, and religion is what we do with it.

Let us assume, now, that instead of seeking to avoid our solitariness we deal seriously with it. What is the result? We make the effort to shut out the external world. We hush the inner senses to a holy calm. We cultivate the power of silence. We retire from the noise and clamour of the external world into the inner sanctuary of our own souls. We shut the door and listen. What is the first fruit of such a discipline? Surely the sense of the void; solitariness, desolation; the sense of being forsaken: these are the first moments in the experience. The sense of fear comes next. And here we are at once conscious of what Professor Rudolf Otto has termed the 'numinous.' 'How dreadful is this place'—that which in religious language we call the fear of God.

Many reach this stage, and then flee in terror back to the external world to shelter amongst their companions. These, though Christians in name, never come within measurable distance of the sound of the gospel of Good News. This is a religion of law and lacks the saving grace of faith. First the void, then the terror, and the last word is Fear. Dare we stop there?

Let us persevere in the experience. There is no way out towards light except through darkness. There is no path to companionship except through the sense of being forsaken—even by God. Yet if we will deal faithfully with our solitariness there awaits us an exceeding great reward. What is it?

The sense of companionship. All the great men of prayer bear witness to it—the sense of His Presence! That is the reward of successful striving in the prayer life. In the region of our solitariness there is a Seeker. We are the objects of a Divine pursuit. Into the region where our nearest and dearest could not penetrate He can find an entrance. The barriers of self fall before His approach, and at long last we are safe and found in Him. First the void, then the fear, and then the Love! Fear of the All-Holy melts into joy in the presence of the All-Loving.

May we imagine it? The sob, the tears, The long, sweet, shuddering breath; then on His breast,  
The great full flooding sense of endless years.  
Of Heaven, and Him, and Rest.

He has kept His promise. 'I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.' What would we more?

We should ponder carefully the setting of this experience, as it throws a flood of light upon the meaning of Calvary. Christ is rightly named the Solitary Man on the Cross. Why? Because it was there that He was able first in His own experience to bridge that awful gap separating fear from love in our human solitariness.

Unredeemed sinners could not themselves bridge it. Were it not for His work, we should still be at the foot of Mount Sinai, dwellers in the dark, fearful of an All-Holy God; lacking the sense of His Presence as Love, and knowing that Presence only as a numinous sense of fear and horror. But the solitary, because the Holy, Son of Man, endured first in Himself the sense of being forsaken—the penalty of our sins. The climax of all our human solitariness was experienced in His Person in one bitter cry of dereliction. And that culmination of our cry in Him and His cry for us issued in Atonement, Reconciliation. There was as its reward the restoration of Communion; there issued from Calvary, Resurrection, and from Resurrection, Pentecost. 'I will not leave you comfortless.' Death is not the last word; nor is isolation the final state. The lost are found; the condemned are liberated; the people sitting in darkness see a great light.

And this is possible as an experience for each one of us in Him—a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness—a conflict in the void with fear issuing in a victorious experience of redeeming love and reconciliation with God in Christ.

If we yield ourselves by faith to Him who thus

reveals Himself to us as the Man of Sorrows, then we move from fear towards love.

Then thro' the mid complaint of my confession,  
Then thro' the pang and passion of my prayer,  
Leaps with a start the shock of His possession,  
Thrills me and touches, and the Lord is there !

It is this sense of His Presence, this assurance of His Companionship, this conviction of His undying Love, which turn our solitariness into something which no description in human terms can describe.

St. Paul knew it, and he does justice to it when he cries out in terms of victory : ' I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life . . . nor things present, nor things to come . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'<sup>1</sup>

#### FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

##### Truth.

' If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples ; and ye shall know the truth.'—Jn 8<sup>st</sup>. (R.V.).

In these words our Lord states what a man essentially requires for the attainment of membership in His Kingdom, and this is the knowledge of the truth. ' If ye abide in my word, ye shall know the truth,' and become citizens of Christ's own Kingdom. The truth here designated is spiritual and ultimate. It is the perfection of this truth that makes its quest a permanent duty—nay more, calls down our reprobation on all contented acquiescence in the ignorance of any kind of truth within our reach.

If, indeed, there is no such relation as the text implies between abiding in Christ's word and the knowledge of the truth in its essential character, then indifference to the claims of truth can entail no moral responsibility, nor error in its quest any practical loss.

To be free in any province of practical human life, we must discover and obey the truths that regulate it. First, there are the laws or truths of Nature. These teach us to achieve what is possible on the one hand, and not to attempt what is impossible on the other. They multiply indefinitely the material comforts of life : they free us from belief in magic, sorcery, and the superstitions that were prevalent in the Middle Ages. With such triumphs of science no age is more familiar than our own. But such conquests of Nature impart no

moral strength. They can give man a certain mastery in the physical world, though all the time they may be entralling his moral and spiritual powers, and making him merely a citizen of this world, a mere serf of the material triumphs that he has achieved.

The truths which our Lord refers to are not the laws of Nature, though the knowledge of these laws is invaluable in its right place, and constitutes a further revelation of God's world.

No more are we to identify the truth in our texts with moral truths. Moral truths hold a far higher place than the truths of science, since they warn us against the encroachments of the lower and sensual elements in our nature, and teach us to cast off all fear but that of wrong-doing. Furthermore, they convince us that it boots little that the head bows to no foreign yoke, if, after all, the heart is the victim of vice, or ignorance, or fear, and that the most dangerous evils are not those that invade man's outward interests, but those that vitiate his character : they condemn that frequently accepted lie that statesmen and nations are not bound by the same morality as individuals they make it manifest that, when licentiousness stains the lives of princes, or falsehood sways the policy of cabinets, they breed a moral pestilence in the nation at large, and teach the subject the same indifference to purity and truth that has the sanction of his ruler's example : they proclaim that the government that uses its powers selfishly, or sacrifices to its own ends the interests of the State, becomes an authoritative preacher of crime, and instructs the citizen to betray the public interest, and becomes venal when it suits his turn : they declare that a selfish policy to the stranger must encourage the growth of selfishness at home, and that bad passions aroused in a people's foreign relations will finally issue in internal and domestic strifes.

But it is not our intention to deal with moral truths in their general bearings. Rather let us limit our thoughts to truth considered in its lower character as veracity, and in its higher character as essential truthfulness. When strictly used there is a wide gulf between the two conceptions, veracity and truthfulness. Veracity implies nothing more than an agreement between our words and thoughts, though the thoughts may have no facts behind them ; whereas essential truthfulness expresses a real correspondence between our thoughts and reality, a correspondence that is only partially possible in this life.

Mr. Bettany in his life of Stewart Headlam says  
' I am told that Headlam's father said of him a

<sup>1</sup> H. M. Relton, *Messages from a Troubled Church to a World in Trouble*, 33.

a boy, "Stewart talks and argues well, but the worst of him in argument is that he is less keen on finding out the truth than in demolishing you as his opponent."

Is veracity or truthfulness, then, obligatory in all emergencies? Some moral philosophers deny any such obligation, and, although they admit that lying is always in some degree evil, maintain that in certain emergencies it is a lesser evil than the evils it is used to avert.

Professor Sidgwick, in his *Methods of Ethics*, declares that 'it is obviously a most effective protection for legitimate secrets that it should be universally understood and expected that those who ask questions which they have no right to ask will have lies told them,' and maintains that we should not 'be restrained from pronouncing it lawful to meet deceit with deceit, by the fear of impairing the security which rogues now derive from the veracity of honest men.' Even Martineau writes: 'The theoretic reasons for certain limits to the rule of veracity are convincing and unanswerable, and compel me to defend any one who acts in accordance with them.' Yet he adds, 'when I place myself in a like position, at one of the crises demanding a deliberate lie, an unutterable repugnance returns upon me, and makes the theory seem shameful,' and he admits that, if he acted on such a theory, he could not 'escape the stab of an instant compunction and the secret wound of a long humiliation.' 'How,' he asks, 'could I ever face the soul I had deceived, when perhaps our relations are reversed, and he meets my sins, not with self-protective repulse, but with winning love?'

The vice of lying is marked with a treachery and a meanness which are all its own. For the gift of speech is based on the supposition that our words will express what we believe and what we feel, but the liar, taking advantage of this all but universal presupposition, secures for his falsehoods a confidence and trust which were otherwise beyond his reach. Hence the inevitable shame that befalls the liar when his guilt is brought to light. Thus Bacon writes: 'There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious,' and this holds true in a special degree when we lie for our own advantage. 'A lie,' writes Kant, 'annihilates the dignity of man,' and Montaigne declares that 'the liar is brave towards God, but a coward towards man.' Thus lying springs in the main from cowardice, whereas veracity and truthfulness, that habit of character in accordance with which we both say and do what

we actually believe, form the basis of all personal excellence.

We might add here that persons who are untrustworthy in matters of small moment can seldom be trusted in things of greater moment.

But it is urged that it may be difficult to be veracious or truthful in certain cases because we lack complete impartiality; to wish to discover the truth on one side rather than on the other is almost unavoidable. This, however, need entail no moral hurt, if our judgment refuses to be biased by our inclinations. In such circumstances we can attain to a high degree of impartiality, and avoid perverting the evidence at our disposal.

It has, however, been objected that an unbiased state of mind is unattainable. But, because perfect veracity or truthfulness is more difficult of attainment than any other human virtue, are we therefore to give a loose rein to untruthfulness? This question needs no answer.

The duty of veracity or truthfulness to our neighbour must not be treated apart from the duty of scientific inquiry, which includes the duty of revealing any truth we find. This latter duty is not always recognized. As the late Dean of Carlisle writes: 'There is probably, in this country at least, too much . . . unwillingness to communicate to the ignorant and the young the results of Science or of scientific Theology, for fear they should weaken the reverence and the morality which have in the past been associated with beliefs no longer tenable.'

The fact that our fathers found truth for themselves does not absolve their sons from the duty of seeking it for themselves: our fathers' findings only furnish a guarantee that their sons, too, shall find truth, if they truly seek it, and make it their own at whatever cost. Truth can never be static. It is a thing that grows from age to age in the school of God. If, therefore, we are children of the truth, and the truth is still to preserve our allegiance, our faith must be at once dynamic and progressive.

All ages of progress are marked by a progressive revelation of truth. It is only to the *intellectually dead* that the creed of the present is the mere reproduction of the creed of the past. Such a creed is in its essence an obedience without knowledge and spiritual growth. Hence such as profess it fear to study its tenets, lest they should make shipwreck of whatever faith they possess, and shun thought and research, lest they should lose whatever religious convictions or prejudices they may chance to have.

'Living truth,' says Schweitzer, 'is that alone which has its origin in thinking. Just as a tree bears year after year the same fruit and yet fruit which is each year new, so must all permanently valuable ideas be continually born again in thought. But our age is bent on trying to make the barren tree of scepticism fruitful by tying fruits of truth on its branches. . . . Not less strong than the will to truth must be the will to sincerity. Only an age which can show the courage of sincerity can possess truth which works as a spiritual force within it. Sincerity is the foundation of the spiritual life.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *My Life and Thought*, 259.

In conclusion, then, the true man is he who bows to no authority save the God who witnesses within him; whose mind is open to all light whencesoever it may come; whose creed rests not on mere tradition, but on the strength of personal conviction; till at last he attains, so far as possible in this world, *truth in word, truth in deed, and truth in oneness with God in Christ*, and so, finally, in the power of the divine life, he overcomes the bondage of the senses, the world, and self, loves goodness and God for their own sake, and becomes in very deed a true disciple of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> R. H. Charles, *Courage, Truth, Purity*, 10.

## Morality without God.

BY THE REVEREND FREDERIC C. SPURR, BIRMINGHAM.

THROUGHOUT the ages there have been many forms of opposition to Christianity; the opposition of the ruling powers, of persecution, of patronage, of philosophy, of popular hatred, and of scientists, experts in their own domain, who have thought that their findings must be fatal to Christian doctrine, and to the supposed historical facts upon which the gospel is builded. The Church has profited, in more than one way, as the result of the polemic directed against her life. She has developed at once a power of resistance, and a power of absorption—two expressions of vitality: resistance to what has been inspired by malice; absorption of what has proved itself to be true by whomsoever discovered. To-day she has little to fear from Philosophy or Science, both of which have become her allies.

In our time a new attack has been launched, or, to be correct, an ancient attack has assumed a novel aspect. Humanism, never wholly absent from the world, has invaded Christian territory and declared itself to be the possessor of a terrain which is claimed by the Church to be its own. The new attack has its war cry, 'Morality without God, or Christ or Christianity.' There is no plea for immorality on the ground that each man may do exactly as he pleases. The plea is rather, that everything truly ethical in Christianity can be gained and preserved far better without God than with Him. The new humanism offers itself as something superior, being able to function without any such handicap as that which it is supposed

the gospel applies. The leaders of the movement speak thus: 'We begin by assuming that the Universe has no interest in man. Of God we know nothing; of man we know much. There is a good life to be lived, and we can live it without reference to any Divinity. It is for man to decide what is that good life. The ancient *gloria in excelsis* must be replaced by a new one, of which Swinburne is the author, "Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things." We are wholly unmoved by any ideas of rewards or punishments. The fear of hell, which once urged men to external morality, has now gone for ever. We know only one world, and we devote ourselves to it, seeking to promote duty, truth, beauty, and human interests alone.'

It must not be supposed that the neo-humanists are kin with those prodigals who company with swine, and who mock at all morality. Many of them appear to be earnest men who really think that they can live the good life apart from the Eternal goodness. Their attitude is intellectual. For the first time, *on scale*, they have offered an intellectual *apologia*, for what in others is already a settled but unexpressed opinion.

Yet the new Apologists, ere their warm breath cools, speak again, and unconsciously retract what they have just affirmed. The late President of the Ethical Society was compelled to admit that 'the hunger and thirst for something beyond the sphere of sense, which is left totally unsatisfied produces at length a restless, tormented feeling

which turns the very joy of existence to sadness and dims the light of life.'

Mr. C. E. M. Joad pleads passionately for a 'mystical experience' to satisfy the heart, while Professor Julian Huxley, while arguing for 'religion without revelation' and a personal God, still desires to retain prayer as a means of tranquillizing the soul. Thus the demand for practical Atheism returns upon itself. The spirits of these advocates are haunted by a mysticism which will not release them, and which needs the living God to satisfy it. This fact is highly significant. . . .

Everybody admits the need of morality. 'The last word of education,' said Mr. T. H. Huxley, 'is to favour morality.' But morality must be 'for its own sake' without reference to religious sanctions or to God. Now it is just here that this non-religious philosophy betrays its first weakness, for to advocate a thing for its own sake is philosophically and ethically absurd. It is equal to the formula 'art for art's sake,' which, when examined, means nothing at all. As well might one speak of 'green for green's sake,' or a 'tree for a tree's sake.' In creation no separate thing exists for its own sake, it exists for something else. Does the sun exist for the sun, or the river for the river? When, then, it is claimed that right and goodness and truth must be sought for their own sake, the answer must be Why? The first question should be, What is right and good and true? These things cannot exist without some absolute standard. Where is that standard to be found? When a man speaks of an honest measure, or weight, he is thinking relatively; in his mind there is an image of some standard to which his own particular measures or weights must conform. And so must it be with morality. Man must seek the highest good, it is said. Granted! but who shall decide what is that highest good? Is it absolute or relative? If absolute, where is it? Certainly it is not found within humanity, which prescribes morality according to its geographical position, or the conventions of its various groups. The ideas of right and goodness differ seriously within and without civilization. What seems perfectly right to a Fijian is repellent to an Englishman. One tribe will kill off its older people as being an encumbrance upon the community; another will carefully tend them to the end. Which is right? It will not do to say that the civilized way is the better; the question is, why is it the better? And the answer to that cuts clean across the claims advanced by our neo-humanists. If, on the contrary, moral ideas are relative, then we must ask

relative to what? Is the final standard to be discovered within humanity as a whole, or in a part of it, or beyond it? The plea for a morality wholly determined by human considerations will not bear examination. It is too narrow, too inadequate, too delusive.

When we speak of human morality, it is humanity as a whole of which we should be thinking. For humanity is essentially one, despite all the differences of race and language and social habit. A worthy morality must embrace all men, as men. Its standards must command the whole, and not only a portion. It must be a law grounded in the nature of things, and not simply the ruling of a group of persons, who make their own laws for their own convenience. It must command life, with authority; the life within as well as the life without; motive as well as conduct. And to command, it must be above us. In a word, it must correspond completely to man's essential nature.

As Dr. Raven has recently reminded us, the primary question to be settled is not that of man's conduct, but of his nature: what he *is*. And it is precisely this radical question which the new humanists studiously avoid, or, if they do not avoid it, they treat it with incredible lightness. It is idle to speak of conduct until we know by what and *to* what we are 'conducted,' and what there is in us to 'duct'—to lead out and develop. There can therefore be no true human morality worthy of the name which fails to recognize what man is and what he is for.

For Christianity, man is a personal, spiritual being. He possesses that plus of the 'mystic' for which Mr. Joad pleads. He has that within him which urges Mr. Julian Huxley and all others to pray. The materialistic account of man, popular a short time since, which reduced him to a combination of chemical elements held together by a vital force, which, when released, fall back into the original dust, no longer holds the minds of the leaders of thought. The 'language of the spirit' permeates our modern scientific and philosophical literature. Men disillusioned by the failure of the laboratory to explain man, and disillusioned also by the breakdown of practical materialism in the social and industrial life of the world, are slowly turning to the Christian conception of man, although as yet they scarcely know it. The spirit of man, half suffocated during recent decades, is beginning to awaken and to assert itself. A great religious revival is undoubtedly on the way.

Man is a related being; he has a relation to

himself and to his neighbour. He must fulfil the whole of these relations or he is not moral. He has an obligation to be the best himself and to seek the best for others. A negative attitude towards himself and others falls infinitely short of what the nature of things demands of him. It is not sufficient that he abstain from cruelty, murder, and falsehood. Something positive is demanded of him as a being related. The fact of obligation is imperative. There is an eternal 'ought' which commands. But what obliges me? What is the extent of my obligation? An 'ought' goes far beyond any capricious selection of duty. Indeed, it is not left to our choice at all. For duty is not a choice, it is a compulsion. It binds us from without. Duty is what is due from us. It is a debt to be paid, not a subscription of whim. But why is there anything due from us, and to whom is it due? Our neo-humanists conveniently forget all this; and restrict their notion of duty within almost capricious limits. Mr. Robert Blatchford in pre-war days, when he also was a pure humanist with no belief in man's spiritual nature or in God, announced his religion as 'to do the best I can for humanity, for morality concerns itself wholly with man.' It sounds brave until we inquire what is the 'best' demanded of you. Even Mr. Blatchford admitted that the canon of Jesus 'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' is true. Can there be anything better than a real love of our neighbour? If this be agreed, then we can ask of the new morality, is it equal to that?

But it is not possible to limit our relations to ourselves and to humanity. We must go far beyond that. To confine ourselves to humanity is to put a ring around our small world and to segregate it from the Universe of which it is a vital part. Man is related to the Universe as well as to a planet. And he is obliged by the law of things to effect an adequate correspondence with the Universe as well as with his own small world. It is his obligation. 'To sustain man's ethical interests it is necessary to connect love of righteousness with eternity.' So wrote Professor Seeley five decades ago. And is it not true, always true? The 'ought' which binds us cannot depend on the vision of any one individual, or on the agreement of any group of people. It must depend upon the eternal laws which govern, not our own world alone, but the Universe itself.

Man belongs to an eternal order. He is vitally related to it, and to its soul—God. He has a Master who has the right to command him. He

is a steward of whom a reckoning is required. The God to whom he is related and bound is not a creation of his own fancy. He has been revealed in a thousand ways and chiefly in Jesus Christ, who reveals Him as being essentially love. Then there can be no worthy morality which is not inspired by the eternal love, and which does not act as does that love, to the extent of sacrifice. Can the new morality without God do that? The moralist may dispense much benevolence, and speak kind words, but will he give himself?

Let us ask boldly for the name of one man who ever gave himself to men, who was not inspired by a love greater than his own. Do they, who in the midst of Christendom claim that a purely human morality suffices for the fulfilment of all obligations, remember the atmosphere they breathe? Nineteen centuries of Christianity have permeated their world with a new spirit, to which they owe the best they have. Is it quite candid and moral to erase this fact from their minds and to pretend that their moral enthusiasms have been generated *in vacuo* without reference to the spirit which, all the time, has pressed upon them and saturated them? What is this but unblushing plagiarism, which steals its fruit from the Christian orchard, and then disowns the orchard?

The men who humanly represent the top peaks of our race—the Moffatts, the Livingstones, the Damiens, the Slessors, the Franciscans—and a thousand more—the highest moralists who loved men and sacrificed themselves for them, owed their inspiration to the love of Jesus and not to themselves. Such men dwarf the rest of us, the moralists to whom correctness of life and benevolence of action are all. They say in the greatest of their lives, 'This is complete morality.' Bring the new morality to the test of theirs, and then ask if it is good enough, great enough.

The conclusion, then, is evident. We cannot be what we should be until we are vitally related to the Universe and to God. Being is greater than acting. The good action may pass muster, but what of the personality that is behind it? What of the inner motive? The motive is the main thing, after all, which gives value to or reduces the value of the action. Then morality cannot be considered apart from the character of the inner life. It is there that we are good or bad, generous or mean, pure or unclean. But who is to judge that inner life and proclaim it moral or otherwise? Shall we ourselves be the judge of our own actions? Then why speak of morality at all, since the affair becomes one of personal caprice which is the

very antithesis of morality. Shall our fellow-men judge us? But how can they, since they know nothing of the inner secrets of other lives, and they themselves are imperfect? If morality is to have any meaning at all it must involve a judgment by a perfect standard, which is at once authentically human and Divine. And who other than Jesus Christ can be that standard? All save a handful of degenerates salute in Him the Highest. Then by that admission He must be their judge. We are back at the soul of Christianity, which we can never escape when we are true to the nature of things.

Life, then, is 'being,' and true being: the total response of our nature to the claim of the Universe upon us. And it is God's Universe, existing for His ends. There can be no morality which does not recognize these ends and pursue them. To speak of utility and the giving of pleasure to others as morality is a begging of the entire question, and a limitation of great things to mean preserves. Morality, then, is either each man his own law—(a thing socially unthinkable), or one group enforcing their ideas upon others (which is tyranny), or it is eternally based in the order of the Universe and wholly above man in its demands. It is quite false to say, with Saleeby, that 'ethics is purely an individual matter,' since this is the negation of all social ideas. It is fallacious to say that morality is only a human evolution established at last because of its social utility, since the highest morality the world has known contradicts the idea of utility when it sacrifices itself, unless by utility is meant what Christianity means by sacrificial love offering itself at cost to the giver in the higher interests of others. In this case utility is an inadequate and even misleading word to employ.

Before the deepest needs of life and its greatest demands, conventional morality is helpless. It cannot rise to love. And before self-interest, whether of individuals or of peoples, conventional morality falls to pieces. When selfishness asserts itself, the word of honour is held lightly, and the animal gets the better of the man. The world is not likely to forget that a solemn pledge made by a moral nation became a mere 'scrap of paper' at the bidding of self-interest: 'dire necessity' it was called.

There is only one secure foundation for a complete human morality. It is the eternal law of love, revealed by and in Jesus Christ. In the presence of Him, each man can only cry—*Pecacci!*

And the only force for promoting morality is the Spirit of that Christ at work in our own spirits. That spirit becomes ours, not by an external imitation of His acts, but an interior surrender to His Lordship.

I have named the late Professor Huxley. He who pleaded so powerfully on behalf of morality, had to confess that his own inner life was an arena of bitter conflict, and he uttered the famous sentence of which Professor Henry Drummond made such great use: 'I protest that if some great power would agree to make me always think what is true and do what is right, on condition of being turned into a sort of clock and wound up every morning before I got out of bed, I should instantly close with the offer.' And Huxley spoke for every man and woman who, paying full homage to morality, knows well that the power to accomplish it in a high and worthy way, lies not within themselves but elsewhere. And the Christian gospel affirms that the gospel is the power (*δύναμις*) of God unto Salvation—the health of the whole life.

## Recent Foreign Theology.

### Early Greek Commentators.

DESPITE the rich apparatus for the understanding of the Pauline Epistles that has been put in our hands by our increasing knowledge of the Græco-Roman world and of contemporary Rabbinism, we cannot afford to neglect the contributions to their exegesis furnished by the early Greek commentators. For these men knew more or less intimately the

economic, social, political, and religious conditions of the world for and within which Paul wrote, and they knew the language he wrote as we can never know it, for it was their own. It is therefore a service of first-rate importance that Professor Karl Staab has rendered to the interpretation of Paul and the exegesis of the Epistles by his publication of the carefully collected remains of some of his Greek-speaking com-

mentators.<sup>1</sup> The writers whose comments are here gathered together are Didymus of Alexandria, Eusebius of Emesa, Akazius of Cæsarea, Apollinaris of Laodicea, Diodor of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Severian of Gabala, Gennadius of Constantinople, Oekumenius of Trikka, Photius of Constantinople, and Arethas of Cæsarea. All the Pauline Epistles (and the Epistle to the Hebrews) are commented on, the basis of the

<sup>1</sup> *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, von Dr. Karl Staab (Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Münster, Westfalen ; Mk. 31.85).

comment being sometimes the single verse, sometimes a longer or shorter section. The comment which, being entirely in Greek, will appeal chiefly to scholars, would make a much wider appeal to students of the New Testament and of the history of exegesis, if they could also be issued in translation. This collection, which is the result of many years of laborious research, is a very definite and valuable enrichment of the material available for the study of the mind of Paul.

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## Entre Nous.

### Guidance.

The autobiography of Dr. Albert Schweitzer—the man whose friends say of him, 'In Africa he saves old niggers, in Europe old organs'—has just been translated into English by Mr. C. T. Campion, and published by Messrs. Allen & Unwin (ros. 6d. net)—it came out in Germany in 1931. It is long since Dr. Schweitzer captured our imagination, and the facts of his life are familiar. Perhaps on the factual side not much fresh will be got from the autobiography, but it will be read for all that. We will go away with a heightened vision—marvelling again at the intellectual strength, sincerity, and singleness of aim of this man. The crucial date in his life was an evening in the autumn of 1904, though it was not until later that he made his decision known. When he was in Paris in 1905 studying theology and music, Schweitzer wrote to his parents telling them that he was going to enter himself as a medical student in order to go to the Congo as a doctor. This idea that he must spend some part of his life for others was not a new one. When he was at the University at Strassburg he had decided that he would consider himself justified in living for science and art until he was thirty 'in order to devote myself from that time forward to the direct service of humanity.' Various attempts were made by him to find the right work. He offered his help in looking after neglected children; spent time on the care of tramps and discharged prisoners. But the longing for a sphere of activity, in which he would be not a part of an organization but wholly free, persisted.

'Many a time already had I tried to settle what meaning lay hidden for me in the saying of Jesus,

"Whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it."

One autumn evening in 1904 his eye caught the title of an article in the magazine of a Paris missionary society, 'Les besoins de la mission du Congo.' The writer expressed his hope that his appeal would bring some of those "on whom the Master's eyes already rested" to a decision to offer themselves for this urgent work. The conclusion ran: "Men and women who can reply simply to the Master's call, 'Lord, I am coming,' those are the people whom the Church needs." The article finished, I quietly began my work, my search was over.'

### Gn xxii. 12.

'When I first went to Africa I prepared to make three sacrifices: to abandon the organ, to renounce the academic teaching activities, to which I had given my heart, and to lose my financial independence, relying for the rest of my life on the help of friends.

'These three sacrifices I had begun to make, and only my intimate friends knew what they cost me.'

'But now there happened to me, what happened to Abraham when he prepared to sacrifice his son. I, like him, was spared the sacrifice. The piano with pedal attachment, built for the Tropics which the Paris Bach Society had presented to me, and the triumph of my own health over the tropical climate had allowed me to keep up my skill on the organ.'

'During the many quiet hours which I was able to spend with Bach during my four and a half

years of loneliness in the jungle I had penetrated deeper into the spirit of his works. I returned to Europe, therefore, not as an artist who had become an amateur, but in full possession of my technique and privileged to find that, as an artist, I was more esteemed than before.

'For the renunciation of my teaching activities in Strassburg University I found compensation in opportunities of lecturing in very many others.

'And if I did for a time lose my financial independence, I was able now to win it again by means of organ and pen.

'That I was let off the threefold sacrifice I had already offered was for me the encouraging experience which in all the difficulties brought upon me, and upon so many others, by the fateful post-war period, has buoyed me up, and made me ready for every effort and every renunciation.'<sup>1</sup>

There have been interesting accounts in two of the Church quarterlies recently of practical experiments which have been tried by churches in certain branches of religious life and service. In the next paragraph we give a summary of the experiment tried by a Primitive Methodist minister in Northampton, an account of which has been given by the Rev. E. Murray Page, B.A., B.D., in *The Baptist Quarterly* (October 1932). Following that are some points from a short article in *The Congregational Quarterly* (January 1933), by the Rev. John Lewis, M.A., Ph.D., in which he describes how he remodelled his Sunday School somewhat after the Scout plan.

#### Men's Firesides.

'There are few things which appeal more strongly to the happy-homed Englishman on a winter's night than his own fireside. . . . It was realization of this well-known fact which, some few years ago, led a young and eager Primitive Methodist minister in Northampton, who was keen to break new ground among men, to hit on the happy title of "Men's Firesides" for an effort he was making to reach them. He called a meeting to which less than a score came. They sat around a fire, chatted and smoked as men do at their own firesides, sang as the wise do in their own homes, and he unfolded his ideas: a week-night gathering for men characterized by freedom and friendliness, where they could smoke and express their minds without let or hindrance, where matters of moment and interest could be frankly discussed, and where men from different walks in life could rub shoulders and get

to know one another, . . . whilst religion should be there as an all-pervading influence and find expression in a closing act of worship. The idea caught on and quickly began to take shape. The first small vestry where they met for discussion soon became inadequate, and before the first session was over the large schoolroom, holding over four hundred, was in use. From a fact the fireside changed into a symbol, represented by electric lamps and red paper, but its warming power grew with the passing days. The form of gathering, whilst not fixed and stereotyped, in outline is this. A first half-hour of music (community singing is still popular though the craze for it has passed). Then an address on some topic of interest, religious, social, moral, travel. (It was soon found that party politics engendered more heat than light.) The address is followed by twenty minutes' discussion. Only on rare occasions is the time allotted enough for those who wish to take part. Then follow coffee, tea, and biscuits (a box at the door defrays expenses, and those who have no money are not made uncomfortable by a collection, whilst the warmth of the fireside usually melts the stony-hearted). The whole is brought to a close by family worship. The first Fireside has now been running some six years, and some results can be tabulated. Three to five hundred men gather week by week. There are scores coming regularly to church and some in office in the church, who for years had not been inside a place of worship. The founder of the movement, the Rev. C. L. Tudor, frequently told the writer that some of his finest and most loyal workers had come from it. . . . Let no one run away with the idea that Firesides are going to solve the problem of the men. This first Fireside had certain distinct advantages. Its founder is a man of strong and attractive personality. It had a fresh field to cultivate, a large new churchless district of the town. Trying out the same idea in the centre of the town in a business quarter we met with nothing like the same success, though even there some very good work was done, particularly among a number of unemployed men, who found our Fireside a real haven.'

#### Young Pioneers.

The conception which underlay Dr. Lewis's remodelled Sunday School was that it was a definite training ground where boys and girls were to be prepared for junior membership of the Church, and it implied that the adult congregation were regarded as a band of disciples pledged to the service of God's Kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *My Life and Thought*, 230.

The first thing that was done was to take all the children from eight to fifteen and give them three preparatory lessons on the Christian Church—‘first of all, a story from *Acts* on the founding of the Church, then a story of the early Christian martyrs, two stories from the Middle Ages and the Reformation, and finally the life of a modern Christian hero. We were careful in this course to emphasize the continuity of the Church as an organization designed to spread the spirit of Christ in the world and to inspire practical brotherhood and reform.’

After this a special lesson was given entitled ‘Be Prepared.’ ‘Examples of apprenticeship and initiation, in primitive tribes, in the Middle Ages, and the case of Knighthood’ were given. ‘We concluded by singing Bunyan’s Pilgrim hymn and with the very fine Scouts’ Prayer.’

Patrol leaders were chosen, and the school, which consisted of about fifty children, was divided into six patrols, each of which chose a Christian hero as its patron Saint. Banners and badges were prepared. First, the Novice Test was worked for. For it the children had to know the Christian Vow:

‘I promise:—

1. To fight against selfishness.
2. To be loyal to Christ and His Church.
3. To obey God’s law.’

To know God’s law:—

1. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.
2. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’

To know the Christian signs and salute—

this not because they would have any intrinsic value but to add a feeling of interest. They had to know the stories of a number of heroes and Saints and to perform a month’s service.

An impressive opening ceremony was designed, and after it was over the school separated for classes or patrols.

When the Novice Test was passed there was a Ceremonial in the Church, and then they went on to the next part in the training, which included the learning of extracts from the Sermon on the Mount; to know the Christian Commandments; to work for foreign missions (making simple toys, etc., on a week evening and gathering funds for collecting boxes). They had also to know the stories of a number of other Saints and heroes. The article describes suggestively how the Commandments were embodied in a little catechism. A good

many of the ordinary graded lessons were worked into the course of lessons explaining God’s law.

‘The Christian commandments were embodied in a little catechism of our own which I hesitate to put into print because it does not pretend to be anything final or perfect. We worked this out in our preparation class and although no doubt we did it very badly, we very much enjoyed doing it, and I think a great deal would be lost if those following in our footsteps did not try to work out their own, too. Briefly, it was built upon the Pioneers’ Promise, “To fight against selfishness, to be loyal to Christ, and to obey God’s law.” Under the first heading we devised three lessons describing the chief kinds of selfishness which Christianity has warred against in the past. This included slavery, etc. Then we talked about forms of selfishness which are still to be defeated in the world, and against which the Christian Church must fight; this included not only personal selfishness, but also such things as war. The story which concluded this little course of lessons was *Fierce Feathers*, which, as most people will know, is a vivid and delightful account of how the Quakers overcame the Red Indians by the power of love. We then had a couple of lessons on loyalty to Christ and the Church. These were based upon the principle of loyalty to those who are masters of their craft. How does a man learn to become an airman or a sailor? How does a girl learn to become a nurse? We have to find our master and learn by loyal discipline, we have to enter the craft as apprentices, as esquires, as probationers, just as boys learn seafaring and girls learn nursing. It is not difficult to find Old Testament stories and stories from Church history illustrating these virtues of faith and loyalty. In Florence Converse’s *House of Prayer* there is the beautiful story of “Tarcicius.”’

They had proficiency badges, such as Missionary (knowledge of, and work for, foreign missions), Samaritan (first aid, nursing, care of sick), Musician (ability to play a hymn on the piano, to sing, and to lead responses).

There were other interesting activities, such as Patrol Competitions, Church Parades, and Dramatic Work. There was a waiting list for new children, and they were admitted only at the beginning of a quarter and all had to begin with the Novice Tests.